

THE EEG - PART 8 'GRADUATION ASSIGNMENT & FINAL PROJECT HANDBOOK'

GA/FP HANDBOOK (BACHELOR)



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GRADUATION AND FINAL PROJECT ASSIGNMENT HANDBOOK (BACHELOR'S)

1. INTRODUCTION

This handbook is the official source of information about the Graduation Assignment and Final Project (GA/FP). Its contents have been discussed and agreed upon at various meetings of the Examination and Graduation Board, with external members, academic supervisors, and administrative staff of Wittenborg, as well as advised by externals. It is designed to provide students with general information and suggestions to help them complete their final graduation assignment/final project (GA/FP) successfully.

The GA/FP is an individual assignment that provides students with the opportunity to engage, in depth, with an area or issue of professional or intellectual interest. Carrying out a GA/FP provides an opportunity to read extensively, with a clear purpose and focus, to develop a fresh understanding of a specific question. Writing the GA/FP, a thesis, is a major piece of work that allows students to share that experience and to disseminate the results.

A thesis must provide evidence of student ability to analyse complex data and to evaluate the implications of their results within the context of their study in the programme.

The thesis should include a reflection on the research process itself, as well as providing a discussion of the problems and issues raised in the course of the study. Students should also reflect on the limitations of the research study and suggest possibilities for the development of future work in that area, either in terms of more research, or practical implications derived from this study.

A thesis should be in a formal academic style, a style quite appropriate for many other reports in professional settings. It has certain conventions. The readers/viewers for the assignment will be other members of the particular academic community (students and academic supervisors). It is not written for a non-expert audience, so students can, indeed should, use an academic style of writing and presenting.

Most research reports use roughly the same format. It does not matter whether the research is a survey on either customer satisfaction, employee opinion, health care, or a marketing research. The important thing is that readers of research reports (i.e. decision makers, funders, etc.) know exactly where to find the information they are looking for. Once the basic rules for the Research Proposal (RP) and report writing are acquired, they can be applied by the authors to any discipline.

1.1 Aims and Objectives – Learning Outcomes

One of the important purposes of GA/FP is to introduce students to empirical research under the supervision of a personal Academic Supervisor. The main contribution of a GA/FP is that the student is obligated to examine a sizeable topic for a sufficient period of time, and to learn to define clearly both the very question and the research findings. By the time a GA/FP is completed, the student should claim to have mastered some aspect of knowledge and is much more aware of the processes of research than before.

In particular, students will gain experience with:

- formulating a research question
- making critical use of relevant literature
- selecting and using appropriate research methods
- analysing and interpreting results and conclusions
- organising and presenting material in a clear, logical, convincing way

1.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of the GA/FP process, students will be able to:

- complete a relatively in-depth research project
- demonstrate a good knowledge of the subject area and the ability to interpret that information
- produce a coherent, well structured, analytical GA/FP
- define and plan a workable research project to meet given research objectives
- know how to carry out an adequate literature review as a major ingredient of one's master-level graduation research project and final thesis
- know how to design research: defining feasible objectives, presenting a helpful conceptual model and describing the methodology that is to be used
- indicate the strength and weakness of a particular research design
- define research as a manageable project whereby involving the relevant stakeholders and possible contributors

Students will work with Academic Supervisor (AS) in order to agree on a suitable GA/FP topic. A general timetable for the work will be set out and a proposal will be submitted. This must be approved by the AS, before the GA/FP can be further processed.

1.3 Final Qualifications

See Part 2 of the programme's Education & Examination Guide (EEG).

1.4 Prerequisite of the GA/FP

Normally students can be admitted to the GA/FP after having gained at least 200 European Credits, which is equivalent to having finished 3 of 4 years, or 60 European credits (ECs) of Phase 3 including the successful completion of the Research Methodology module. In addition, their research proposals need to be approved by their Academic Supervisors. Students should complete the Multidisciplinary (Phase) Exits Exams (MEEs for Phase 1, Phase 2 and Phase 3) before submitting their GA/FP. They are expected to have demonstrated in their previous work the capacities necessary to successfully complete a GA/FP and to show that their choice of topic is appropriate for such an assignment.

1.5 Submission of GA/FP

A student is only allowed to submit a final version of their GA/FP if the following conditions have been met:

- Student has obtained all required 220 ECs as per their specialisation, and has completed all their MEEs (Phase 1, Phase 2 and Phase 3).
- Student has submitted all thesis chapters (including questionnaires) and original data used in the research before the designated deadlines. All submitted materials need to be checked and approved by the supervisor.
- All liabilities like library books and any other borrowed materials are returned by the student
- There are no financial dues to Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences by the student
- In order for the GA/FP to be marked, students have to complete and submit a clearance form before the deadline and get an official approval from the study advisor, academic supervisor, and the concerned office as stipulated in the clearance form. Without the approval of the clearance form, the GA/FP will NOT be marked. The online form can be found in the GA/FP online area.
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1.6 Study Load

The GA/FP will be expected to include a substantial amount of original, theoretical, analytic and empirical work and be 10,000 to 12,000 words in length (depending on the type of GA/FP), excluding appendices. Precise details about the length of all types of GA/FP are given in the latter sections.

The GA/FP module is worth of 20 ECs, which is equivalent to 560 hours of work. This includes reading, research, field study, writing, review, and defence.

1.7 Teaching and Learning Methods

Students will work on their own for the writing of the GA/FP. This will be supported by regular Academic Supervisorial meetings with the Academic Supervisor, in which students will be expected to produce such work that both the Academic Supervisor and the students shall agree upon.

1.8 Assessment Criteria

Students will be required to demonstrate that they have a good knowledge of the subject area and a clear plan for a GA/FP by producing a Research Proposal in the area on which the research is being conducted. It is required for students to reach a Pass level in these parts of the assessment before being allowed to proceed with the complete GA/FP.

The GA/FP will be assessed for its demonstration of knowledge of the subject area as follows: the range of material used, the originality of the material presented, the addition of new knowledge, solution(s) for any research issues/problems, the demonstration of research and presentational skills, the ability to demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the subject area, and the ability to apply theory to practice.

2. GRADUATION

On the following page is shown what the final qualifications are of the Bachelor of Business Administration, the achievement of which should be apparent on the completion of the GA/FP, which is the last step towards the degree.

3. RESEARCH PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT

Preparing a Research Proposal (RP) is an important part of the research process. The RP outlines the research topic, objectives, main research question, methods and so on. The RP requires approval from the Academic Supervisor before students are allowed to start the actual research. The next section will present some guidelines for writing a RP.

3.1 Guidelines for Research Proposal Development

To be considered for registration for a final research project (GA/FP), all students must submit a research proposal that outlines their intended research. Research proposals should be presented under headings that provide the title and summary of the study, as well as addressing each of the points listed in the "Research Proposal Template" that is available on the online area.

3.2 Outline of the Research Proposal

Title of the Study

The title can be a working title; it can be changed at a later date. It should convey the essence of the proposed work.

Introduction

This is the Introduction to research topic. Here you provide a clear introduction to the selected research topic. Try to focus on the research topic instead of a case/company or context. Start with the broader context and narrow it down to the specific topic within that context, that you want to focus on.

Problem Statement

First or all, it should be made clear whether the study has the primary aim of problem solving for the benefit of one particular organisation (consultancy Report) or whether it intends to generate general knowledge (Academic Dissertation).

Next to that, a problem statement should be developed. The problem statement should capture in one sentence the issue that will be addressed in the GA/FP. This can be the issue the organisation needs to be addressed in case of a consultancy report, or the issue in terms of the knowledge gap that needs to be "closed", in case of an academic dissertation.

Relevant Background Literature

In this section an outline of key research should be presented that has already been carried out in the particular area and/or other academic or professional literature as contextual information Literature review should be limited number of paragraphs where you present the academic foundation you plan to discuss in the literature review of your GA/FP.

Research Objectives

Now the problem statement is clear, you can start describing how your research will be laid out to solve the problem. The first step here is to define (a) Research Objective(s). The research objectives

(ROs) provide an accurate description of the specific actions a researcher will take in order to reach the aim of the research.

Research objective(s)

- must be highly focused and feasible.
- address the more immediate project outcomes (relevance).
- make accurate use of concepts and be sensible and precisely described.
- emphasize how aims are to be accomplished (to explore, to explain, to find out, to establish, to test, to investigate etc.).

In case more than one RO is formulated, the RO's are usually numbered so that each objective reads as an 'individual' statement to convey your intention.

Main Research Questions and/or Sub Research Questions

Next step in developing your research proposal is converting the knowledge part of the Research Objective in a set of clearly focused research questions and sub questions, that are worth asking and capable of being answered within the confines of a final research project.

(Sub) research questions should be relevant and related to the main research question, logically structured. Answers on all sub questions should enable you to give a clear answer on your (main) Research Question and ultimately help you to achieve your research objective(s).

A Good Research Question:

1. Has a question mark at the end.
2. Is specific and focused.
3. Is neutral and objective.
4. Focuses on knowledge, not on solutions.
5. Is an open question (so, not a question that can be answered with yes or no).

Keep in mind, when developing your research objectives and questions, you implicitly make decisions on methodology, your research units and or population and you determine in a way what the Literature Review in your Final Project will focus on.

Significance of the Research

This section should illustrate why the research question(s) or hypotheses are worth addressing.

Purpose of the Study

Explain whether it is exploratory, descriptive or explanatory/causal study. Avoid confusing the purpose of the study with your research objectives.

Research Methodology and Methods

In this section you describe your methodological decision and next to that you describe the methods you're planning to apply and discuss why this is the most appropriate way to go in your plan.

Methodology

Describe your methodological choice in terms of explorative/explanatory/descriptive and inductive/deductive and the nature of your research in terms of qualitative/quantitative and relate these decisions to one of the research paradigms/philosophies.

Methods

Describe your strategy, population, sampling techniques, data collection methods and give an indication of how you plan to do your analysis. Keep in mind, sometimes you need different methods to get to the answers on the individual Sub-Questions. If this is the case, specify the methods you want to apply for all sub-questions.

Ethical Considerations

In this section you describe the consideration on ethical issues involved in conducting the research such as the need for informed consent and, if necessary, the procedure for obtaining it (consider the templates and guidelines in Appendix 1).

Timetable for the Research

In order to establish the feasibility of your proposal a detailed timetable should be added. The timetable should be specific and give a week-by-week overview (Use a Gantt chart).

Anticipated problems and limitations This section should highlight any anticipated problems and limitations in the proposed study, including threats to reliability and validity and how these will be countered.

References

You should add list of references relating to the proposal (presented according to ARU Harvard style referencing). Make sure that every reference in your text, is in your reference list and that every item in your reference list relates to a citation in the text (don't add items to your reference list that are not in the text of your proposal).

Appendices

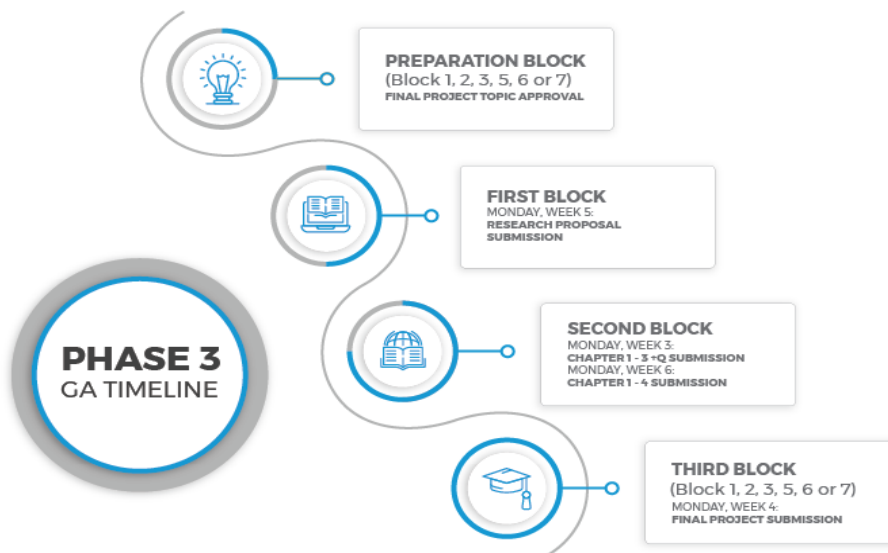
If appropriate you can add appendices, which contain any material that will be used or adapted for the benefit the study, including permissions to make use of certain sources.

NOTE: All relevant information regarding the prerequisites and the actual process will be put in the Graduation Assignment/Final Project (GA/FP) module online area.

3.3 Planning and Feedback Opportunities

This process begins every study block (Sep, Oct, Dec, Feb, Apr, May). Refer to Table 1 of the GA/FP Timeline (Bachelor)

Table 1: GA/FP Timeline (Bachelor)



Explanation: Preparation Block

Before a student can start with the Research Proposal (RP), the topic of the research needs to be approved by the academic supervisor. The research topic should be in the context of the specialisation the student is in. For example, if the student is specialising in logistics, the research topic should be related to logistics or supply chain. The student must send their Research topic or Research Plan to the Academic Supervisor three days before the first supervision meeting.

The Research Topic/Research plan is discussed during the first supervision meeting. If it is approved by the Academic Supervisor (AS), the student can start developing a Research Proposal based on the approved Research Topic/Research Plan. If the Research Topic/Research Plan is not approved, the student is required to modify the Research Topic/Research Plan according to the feedback that has been given and send it to the AS again for approval.

First Block

During the first block, the student must develop a Research Proposal based on the approved Research Topic/Research Plan and should contain all decisions that are made on the execution of the research.

Research Proposal Block Schedule (Block September, October, December, February, April, May)		
Block Weeks	Day	Deadlines
Week 1	Monday	Upload research subject area & topic (two topics)
	Monday-Friday	Academic Supervisor reviews work submitted by the students
Week 2	Monday	Students whose topic and research areas have been approved are informed and asked to write the complete RP and submit within two weeks. Those who failed are given till Wednesday to submit new and/or revised research subject area & topics. Students who did not meet the submission deadline for week 1 have their first and final opportunity to submit a research subject area and topic for that block.
	Wednesday	Students whose submissions were assessed as insufficient on Monday are given a second chance to submit a revised version.
Week 3	Monday	Feedback for students who submitted research areas and topics in week 2. Students who fail restart the process in the following block(s). Students who pass have one week to complete the full RP.
Week 3	Monday	Deadline for the submission of the final complete RP for detailed assessment.

Week 5: Students must upload the full Research Proposal according to the RP template and guidelines set in the GA/FP handbook.

The deadline for uploading a research proposal is Monday of week 5 of every teaching block at **4 p.m.**

CET Week 6: Students will receive results of RP from the AS. Students may arrange meeting with AS to discuss and develop Chapters 1-3 which will be due in the fourth block.

Important Notes RP Block Schedule:

- a. This RP planning schedule is developed for those in full-time study. It is designed to facilitate the students in their bid to receive approval for their RP from both markers. According to this planning, students who are working full-time on their RP can complete it on schedule within a specific block. Students working part-time, or completing any other study requirements, should consider completing this process over an extended period and must discuss this clearly with their Academic Supervisor.
- b. Students should make sure that the submitted content is not a draft and/or final draft but the absolute, final, error-free version before pressing the submission button on the deadline for submitting any part and/or final version RP.
- c. Block Weeks mentioned in this schedule are the standard 6 weeks (not the lesson weeks) of each block excluding any **Introduction Weeks (IW)**, **Study Weeks (SW)** and **Catch-up Weeks** mentioned in any block in the year calendar. Please check the RP online area for the specific days and times for upload deadlines.
- d. The Turnitin RP upload area/s **CLOSE** at **4 p.m. CET** on the specified day. Once it is closed, it will become hidden to students and the upload area in the next block will open. If students miss the deadline, they will need to submit in the next block's submission area.
- e. Take note that if the deadline falls on a national holiday, it will be moved to the immediate (pre/post) working day in the same week. For example, if Monday is 2nd Easter Day (national holiday), the submission deadline will be moved to Tuesday. The time of 16:00 remains the same.
- f. Technical errors: Students must make sure to attempt the upload well before the deadline. If there is any technical error, students are obliged to contact the Help Desk at helpdesk@wittenborg.eu immediately for help, but no later than 30 minutes before the deadline and they should send their work as an attachment.

3.4 RP Feedback and Academic Writing Workshops

The workshops cover **Academic Writing, Research Proposal writing, Qualitative/Quantitative Research, etc.**

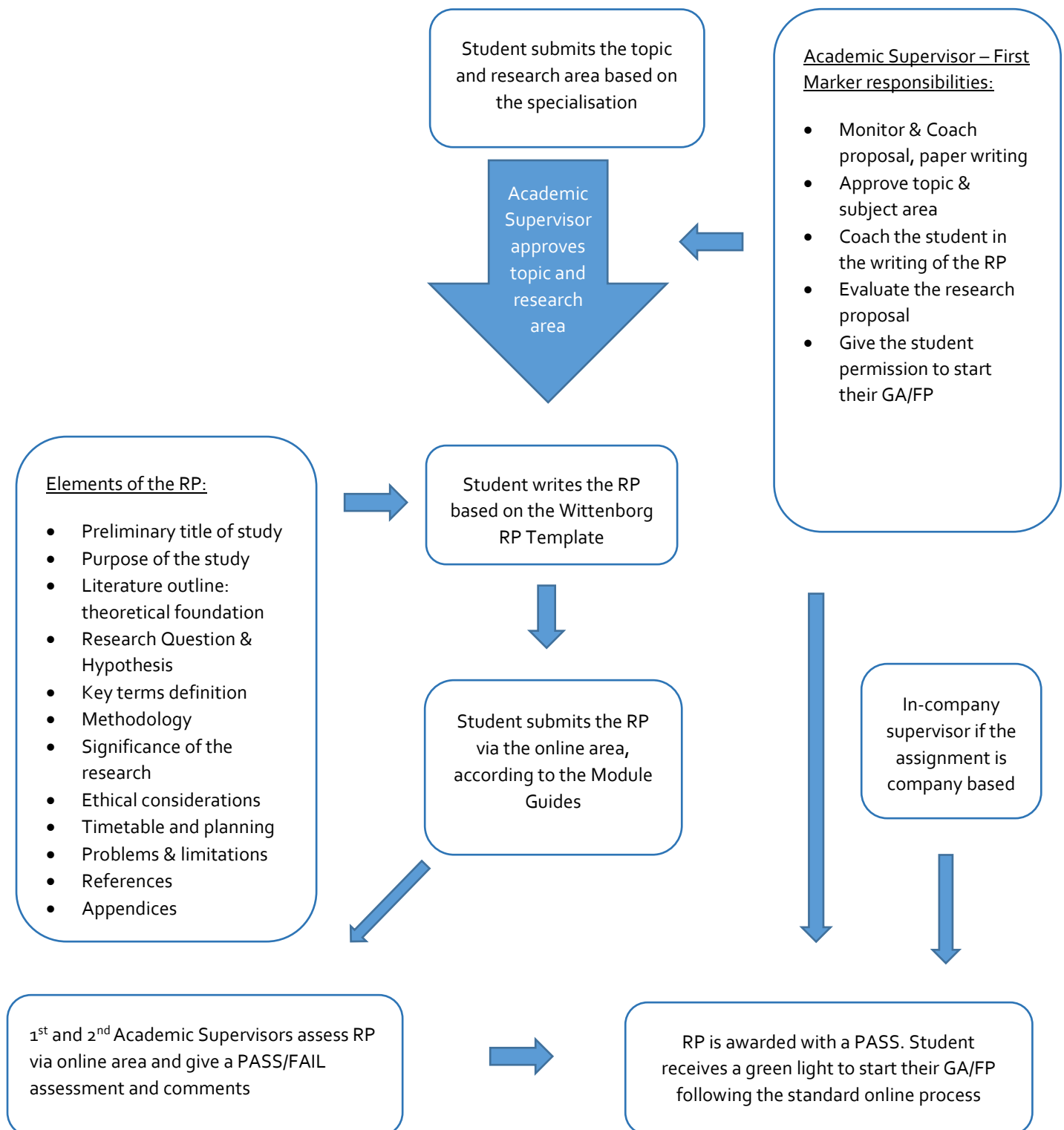
The schedule of the RP Feedback and academic writing workshops will be published in the RP online area and planned on the Timetable.

Rules for Attending RP Feedback and Academic Writing Workshops:

- a. There will be six RP feedback and academic writing workshops organised every academic year to support students in the development of their RP and the complete their GA/FP.
- b. All phase 3 students are welcome to attend these workshops. They need to have attended at least one workshop before they start developing their RP.
- c. All students interested in getting feedback **must** upload a poster via Turnitin and prepare for a short presentation.
- d. No feedback of discussion for students attending this session without uploading a poster as per the given guidelines.

Students present and sign the RPW attendance sheet. For use by Academic Supervisors, an RPW attendance sheet is available in the RPW online area.

3.5 Flow chart of completing Research Proposal



4. GA/FP TYPES AND LAYOUT

The following highlights the commonalities associated with any type of GA/FP:

A research project is a sustained investigation of an important topic, area or issue relevant to your programme of study. It will demonstrate an up-to-date understanding of developments concerning this topic, area or issue. If possible, the concept should be original, or you should investigate an issue using one of the methodologies/models contained in your programme.

A research project is not merely a collection of all the information that you can find concerning a particular topic. Instead:

- It seeks to explain how something works, or why something happens in the way that it does, and/or critically compares existing practices, knowledge and understandings, and where possible attempts to discover and conceptualise latest information and knowledge.
- For your research project you should select an issue in your field of study that you can pursue in depth; one which allows you to analyse existing ideas, theories, and concepts, and through original research contributes to debates and knowledge relating to the subject in question.
- The topic should always be placed within the context of the disciplinary domains that you have developed in your study to date.

The GA/FP is a substantial piece of work leading to the production of a thesis normally of between 10,000 to 12,000 words, excluding appendices (the word *thesis* here covers all written submissions which will vary in style content and size depending on which type of project is adopted).

Above all, the final project is an opportunity for you to explore an area or topic that you find interesting and important. It is much easier to keep your motivation high if you find your dissertation topic inspiring.

There are two main types of assignment: dissertation and an applied business assignment.

The next sections identify the key types of research assignments. Students need to be clear at the beginning as to the type of assignment they will be undertaking as the guidelines and final output will be significantly different. It is important that students acknowledge which type of assignment they intend to pursue at the earliest opportunity. The key component parts of each type of assignment are summarized below.

4.1 Types of GA/FP

4.1.1 Academic Dissertation

This type of assignment will include a critical review of relevant literature and independent empirical research carried out by students, and:

- Wherever possible the literature review should be based upon academic publications (normally not general textbooks), official statistics/reports, and if possible, articles in refereed academic journals. It should critically compare and evaluate relevant concepts, models and theories.
- The research should normally involve the students in the design of an independent empirical research project integrated with the subjects of the literature review. Students will need to set its overall purpose, its aims and objectives, and to choose relevant research methods.
- The empirical research itself can use one or more of a variety of methods, including quantitative sample surveys, and qualitative methods, such as interviews, focus groups, and participant observation. Using secondary data is a valid approach for empirical research if the data is reliable, cannot be replaced by primary data, and is subjected to a comprehensive analysis to draw independent conclusions.
- If a sample survey is used, students will be expected to select and justify the sample population, discuss sampling frames, design questionnaires, conduct pilot surveys, and analyse findings.
- If qualitative methods are used, students will be expected to select and justify specific qualitative methods (e.g. interviews, observations, focus groups, discourse analysis, etc.) and analyse findings.
- If analysis of original archive/secondary data is involved, students will be expected to identify and justify relevant archive/secondary data, and critically analyse the data.

4.1.2 Applied Business Assignment: Consultancy Assignment

Consultancy is normally defined as an independent and objective advisory service provided by a qualified person(s) to a client (company and/or organisation) to help them identify and analyse problems and opportunities. A consultancy assignment also recommends solutions or suggests actions with respect to the identified issues, and even provides help to the company and/or organisation in the implementation of solutions. Clients are not necessarily interested in the academic context that may underpin a consultancy assignment; they tend to be more interested in the data or market research collected and recommended strategies for a way forward. It is envisioned that while students may deliver a typical piece of consultancy to a client, they are required to submit a project to Wittenborg that demonstrates its academic underpinning. This may be something similar to a literature review that is included as part of a typical dissertation.

Students will be responsible for finding a commissioner/client who may wish to have a piece of consultancy undertaken (grounded in a related industry sector). The consultancy should be related to a subject in which students have in-depth knowledge and detailed understanding, to be able to combine theory and practice to solve problems and suggest ways forward. This needs to be approved by the Academic Supervisor and company supervisor. A typical consultancy project would have a commissioner/client identifying the terms of reference and the student consultant submitting a proposal to identify how they would respond to the proposed project's overall purpose.

A proposal normally acts as a contract between the consultant and commissioner/client and identifies key deliverables such as agreed primary data collection, and timings associated with interim draft and final reports. These deadlines must be coordinated with Wittenborg's due dates for the Graduation Assignment. Once the commissioner/client and Wittenborg accept the proposal, the student will work both with the commissioner/client and under the supervision of an Academic Supervisor. The student shall submit the final piece of consultancy to the client, which may or may not include the academic literature that underpinned the piece of research. At the same time, the

student must submit the consultancy project to Wittenborg that meets the required elements of the content for GA/FP.

Advice on Commissioned Research

Whatever type of research assignment chosen, students may focus upon a problem or issue of interest to a particular organisation, which may help them to complete it in various ways. In such cases, students should be clear that:

- The research assignment will be assessed solely based on the same criteria outlined in this document (GA/FP Handbook).
- The copyright to the research and to any findings discovered during the course of the GA/FP rests with Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences.
- In some cases, the research for the graduation assignment may be “sponsored” by an external organisation. Such sponsorship can take a variety of forms, which may include:
 - Privileged access to information
 - Help in conducting market research surveys, etc., within the organisation
 - Payment of expenses relating to the research
 - Payment of a fee to the student as a researcher

In return for the sponsorship, the commissioner/client may expect their own copy of the research project, or a client report. This does not affect in any way Wittenborg’s requirement to submit two copies of the graduation assignment for assessment as part of the degree.

Our policy regarding this type of sponsored research is as follows:

- If a commissioner/client seeking a student researcher contacts Wittenborg, or, as is more common, seeking an internship student with a research question accompanied, this opportunity will be advertised and the commissioner/client will be expected to select a suitable person from amongst those who apply.
- If students are approached directly by a commissioner/client, they will be expected to discuss this with the Academic Supervisor; however, the sponsorship arrangement is their own business.
- Client satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the research will not be considered in the assessment of the research project. The research project should meet the rules and regulations laid down in this Handbook.
- It must be stated on the acknowledgement page if the project was sponsored, and the name of the sponsoring organisation or individual, and the nature of the sponsorship must be mentioned. Also, it must identify how the results will or may be used by the sponsor.

Projects may, at the sponsor’s request, be marked confidential – in that case, the specific results deemed sensitive by the sponsor will be seen only by the assessors. The copies of the Graduation Assignment/Final Project (GA/FP) will not be made public for a maximum confidentiality period of two years, if the Organization wishes to impose a temporary embargo (see Appendix 2 for the Non-Disclosure Agreement template).

4.2 The Written Style of a GA/FP

A bachelor's level GA/FP should be presented in ways that serve the particular purpose of the research. This includes all components of the assignment, but particularly the literature reviewed, the models adopted, the methods used, the results obtained and the analysis and conclusions.

All research results in the production of a GA/FP, although the word limit may vary depending upon which type of assignment is undertaken. Above all, the written thesis should be clear and concise, and written to inform rather than to entertain. Students should avoid too many numbered sub-headings in chapters, as this affects discussion & integration (remember, writing GA is not writing a report). Students should be careful about the type of language being used; specifically, adopt the style of writing that is appropriate in a typical academic paper for the area of study. Check EEG Part 5 Academic Writing Handbook for more information. While writing, students should always have the potential reader(s) in mind. A graduation assignment is not for members of the general public, but rather for the professional field where the research is based.

Important Notes:

From the very beginning, it is required to establish an overall research aim (or set of aims) for the project that can be stated in less than 25 words. The content of the thesis should be relevant to this aim, and the research methods should be appropriate for it. The aim should not normally be to simply describe something, but rather to seek to improve the theoretical understanding or practical application of the phenomenon under investigation/research.

The objectives should be chosen and designed to achieve the overall aim (or set of aims). They should have a clear logical structure and should be related to each other. If the thesis has more than one aim, the objectives should meet each aim set. **The first objective** will normally relate to the general academic context in which the research is set, e.g., marketing, human resources, quality, logistics, motivation, commitment and so forth. **The last objective** will normally be an outcome objective, the "so what?" test.

4.3 The Layout of a Typical GA/FP

The layout of a typical GA/FP will now be explained in a little more detail. Some of the sections below may not be necessarily included in the final submission, depending upon the type of GA/FP chosen to complete (refer to the table below to see summary of which sections may be relevant for each type of GA/FP). However, if any of the necessary parts is missing (especially all the grey parts in Table 4.1, the references, the research proposal, and the original data), the GA/FP will be considered as incomplete.

Table 4.1 Guide to Typical Contents of a GA/FP

Guide to typical contents of GA/FP	Academic Dissertation	Applied Business Project	Creative Output
Contents/Type of GA/FP		Consultancy Project	
Title page and official front cover	X	X	X
Abstract	X		X

Executive summary		X	
Acknowledgements and declaration of originality	X	X	X
Table of contents (including appendices)	X	X	X
Lists of tables and figures	X	X	X
Glossary	X	X	X
Introduction (including the overall aim/s and objectives and terms of reference for consultancy project)	X	X	X
Literature review/secondary research findings	X	X	X
Research methodology and methods	X	X	X
An analysis of the market and business environment appropriate to the selected concept based on a range of secondary sources.		X	
Primary research findings	X	X	
Conclusions	X	X	X
Recommendations or strategy	X	X	
References	X	X	X
Appendices - (Research proposal and any necessary documents)	X	X	X
Word count *	10,000 – 12,000	10,000 – 12,000	5,000 – 10,000

** Word count excludes the abstract, acknowledgements, table of contents, references, tables and figures, the appendices, and the original data. The grey parts show the 'core text' used for establishing the word count.*

4.3.1 The Title Page

This should contain the title, which should be indicative of the subject matter (but not just a straightforward description of the subject matter and not a research question). It is helpful for students to look at other GA/FP and/or research dissertations in the same field of study for possible examples of appropriately worded titles. The title page of the GA/FP should include the student's full name and student number, full name of the Academic Supervisor, Type of GA/FP, institution, names of the degree programme and specialisation, institution, and the month and year. All portions of the title page must be double spaced. Nothing else should appear on the title page (see Figure 4.1).

<p>Full Title of GA/FP (centred in top quarter of page, Font size 18 and bold)</p> <p>Figure/Picture (optional)</p> <p>by</p> <p>Full name of author</p> <p>S-Number</p> <p>Full name of the Academic Supervisor</p> <p>Type of GA/FP (academic dissertation/consultancy report etc.)</p> <p>A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of</p> <p>Name of the degree programme (e.g. Bachelor of Business Administration)</p> <p>Specialisation (e.g. International Business Administration (Economics & Management))</p> <p>Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences</p> <div></div> <p>Month, and year submitted</p>

Figure 1 Sample Title Page

4.3.2 The Abstract (for dissertation)

This is a short paragraph, which effectively summarises the main aims, methods used, findings, conclusions, and recommendations. It should be 400-500 words and be written on one-page maximum. The abstract would be one of the last parts to be written.

4.3.3 An Executive Summary (for applied business assignment)

An executive summary is normally included for a consultancy project. The summary should highlight key findings from any primary data collected, and recommended strategies and/or solutions. The summary should be written in a way that highlights the contents of the report, and can range from 1-3 pages.

4.3.4 Acknowledgements

In this section students should acknowledge and thank those who have been of particular help in completing the project. It is proper academic practice to acknowledge that any errors or omissions are the researcher's sole responsibility. It is a must to state in this section (at the bottom of the acknowledgements page) that..."I confirm that this project is my own work and no part of it has been previously published elsewhere or submitted as part of any other module assessment".

To ensure transparency, any use of AI-generated content (text, figures, images, code) in the GA/FP must be disclosed in the acknowledgments. This includes identifying the specific AI system/tool and clearly marking sections where AI helped create content. Briefly explain the AI's role in each instance, e.g., "In Chapter 4 Results, [Name of AI tool] was used in analysing and visualising the qualitative data". Common AI editing and grammar tools are generally exempt from this disclosure. However, it is always wise to keep a backup of the original work before making any significant changes, especially when using AI tools. In this way, students can compare in writing and learn, prove their authorship, and revert changes if they need to. The transparency and use of AI system/tool will be considered when assessing the quality and authenticity of the assignment. See the declaration template in Appendix 3.

The acknowledgements must include notes about any sponsorship, help or financial aid the students may have received from an organisation or individual.

Word Count

One final criterion that must be identified at the bottom of the acknowledgements page is the word count. The word count for a standard research dissertation is 10,000 – 12,000 words.

Where a thesis is accompanied by material other than written form the word count guidance will vary. If students are undertaking the assignment with creative output, then a reduced word limit may be agreed with the tutor and the supervisor for the written aspect of the project. Whatever the nature of the thesis, the agreed word count will be strictly adhered to. Any GA/FP with the word count outside of the leeway or more than 20% over the maximum will be penalised (up to 0.5 marks). In addition, if the word count is more than 20% below the minimum requirement, the paper will NOT be accepted for assessment.

The word count includes all text within the main body of the thesis, not including the abstract, acknowledgements, table of contents, references, tables and figures, and the appendices. It is the responsibility of the student to make sure the word count will be able to be checked when the GA/FP is submitted through Wittenborg-Online. **The use of images containing text as a substitute for written content in the thesis is strictly prohibited.** This includes, for example, screenshots of textual material or quotes from interviews used in place of properly written and formatted text. Failure to adhere to this rule will result in unverifiability of the word count and authenticity, and the thesis will **NOT** be accepted for assessment.

4.3.5 The Table of Contents

This should be written on its own page(s) and should show chapter/major section headings and page numbers. The table of contents can be created manually or automatically using Microsoft Word Processor or similar processors.

Numbering

Page numbering in Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, etc.) usually begins with the first page of the Introduction chapter, etc.). The preliminary sections (Abstract, Contents list, etc.) are numbered with small Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, etc.). The title page, references, and appendix should not be numbered.

Tables and figures should be numbered consecutively throughout the thesis. Tables/figures should be numbered starting within each chapter (e.g. Table 2.1, 2.2, refers to the first and the second table in chapter two). Figure 3.1 will refer to the first figure in chapter three and so forth.

4.3.6 List of Tables and Figures

This should be placed after the table of content. It should contain a list of tables and figures used in the thesis.

4.3.7 Glossary

Sometimes used by students and not mandatory, a glossary is a list of technical terms, esoteric terms or acronyms and their meanings. If the thesis includes any of these, it is helpful to include a glossary either at the beginning or at the end. (If included at the beginning of the thesis, it should be placed before the first page of the introduction chapter and after the lists of figures and tables).

4.3.8 The Introduction

This first chapter should put the research into context. It should be written in such a way that after reading it, the readers familiarise themselves with the topic, and understand why the study is being carried out. It should also give the readers an indication of how the researcher will carry out the study. It normally expands on the content highlighted in the research proposal. It should contain:

- An outline of the purpose of the assignment. Where applicable, students should also outline the rationale for the topic or concept, including reasons why they decided upon the area of the research. It is advisory to include brief details of knowledge and concepts that have inspired the interest in the particular topic, for example, profile/general information of selected research case or context. Students should indicate whether it is an exploratory, descriptive and/or explanatory/causal study.

- A statement of the problem that clearly identifies the issue that is going to be studied. Research is done to prevent or solve problems, or to improve situations, or to address an information gap. Mere curiosity is not enough. Clearly state the value of/why this issue must be studied and what the implications could be if the study is not carried out.
- The aims and objectives of the assignment (make sure to show how it holds together, revealing its logic and structure).
- The research questions and/or hypotheses.
- For the applied research where the commissioner or client is involved, include the original terms of reference from the commissioner or client that demonstrates the overall purpose of the work.
- A brief introduction to the chosen methodology. Students should ensure that each aim/objective has a method for achieving it.
- Significance of the research – a statement that illustrates why the research question or hypothesis is worth asking.
- A very brief outline of the content of each chapter, i.e. structure of the GA/FP.

4.3.9 The Literature Review

This section should contain the comprehensive academic underpinning for the GA/FP. It should demonstrate that a thorough investigation has been conducted of relevant secondary sources, by evidence of understanding, outlining, comparing and discussing key ideas, explanations, concepts, models and theories. Students are expected to demonstrate the understanding of the material, not merely describe what various authors have said. Students should present these issues in a systematic, well-structured and logical sequence. Do not use too many sub-headings as these interrupt the flow of the work.

Students will be expected to use prominent and up-to-date academic sources (normally peer-reviewed academic journal papers instead of textbooks). In broad terms, the results of this secondary research should provide students with ideas and research gaps as to what they might find when they conduct the empirical research. As such, it should be ensured that the findings of the literature review are relevant for the planned empirical research and vice-versa.

References/in-text citations to secondary sources should be given in the text, not just for quotations, but wherever ideas and information drawn from the work of others is used. If literature sources are not acknowledged, this will be considered as plagiarism.

At the end of the literature review, a conclusion should be drawn on the theoretical/conceptual framework that the student plans to apply in the research. It should specify the aspects/constructs/variables and their (expected) relations. This framework will form the basis for the development of the data collection tool as it specifies the aspects/variables that need to be covered in the data collection tool. It is strongly advised to visualise this framework by adding a figure of it.

As previously stated, commissioner/clients may not necessarily be interested in the academic underpinning or theory that may contribute to a business project. However, this literature must be included in the submission to Wittenborg. It is advisable to discuss with the commissioner/clients as to whether they want an academic "literature review" included in the submission to them. Of course, relevant non-academic sources, such as government statistics or market research reports, which would normally be included in consultancy work and would be referenced accordingly.

4.3.10 Research Methodology and Methods

The discussion of research methodology and methods can be a separate chapter, or a section of the chapter in which students critically analyse the findings. However, whichever is selected, it should clearly show how the methods chosen relate to the aims/objectives and to the literature review.

The section on methodology should include a rationale for the choice of methodologies including the research approach and purpose.

The section on methods should clearly specify the methods that have been applied when executing the research. This includes description and justification for the chosen strategy, a research population and the applied sampling technique and sample size, the applied data collection technique and data analysis. In the rationale, one should consider what alternative methods might have been employed (particularly those which related studies have employed), together with their advantages and limitations for the research. For instance, why did the student choose to conduct a survey instead of a case study and vice versa, why a qualitative or quantitative research approach?

Remember that the methods should critically relate to issues identified in the literature review. As part of the final write-up, students may want to provide an in-depth reflection on the research methods chosen and its limitations.

It is also important to consider the issue of ethics in relation to the collection and use of the primary data. Ethical considerations should be continuously kept in mind throughout the GA/FP process. It does not mean that students should discuss ethics generally, but should reflect on and discuss how ethical issues relating to their research were actually addressed during the primary research stage. For example, students will have to consider whether it is needed to keep the names of any people interviewed or surveyed anonymous. It must be clear to interviewees or respondents how the information they provide will be used. Other ethical considerations could include the following: how any visual data such as photographs or films will be "used". What ethical considerations might there be in the uses to which such data is put? If students have collected any data from a company or organisation, is it allowed to use the name of the company, or the name of the individual(s) interviewed? Will any respondents that take part in the data collection be 'harmed' in any way?

When working with a commissioner/client, a consultant (i.e. the student in this case) would normally seek feedback and approval for any primary research instruments that would be used as part of the research process.

4.3.11 Empirical Research Findings (Results Chapter)

This section reports on and discusses the findings of the study. The findings, their critical analysis and conceptualisation should be presented section by section in a systematic, well-synthesised and logical sequence. All the findings should, of course, be directly relevant to the aims and objectives of the research and consistent with the framework that is presented in the literature review. Students should consider the extent to which the reader can rely on the findings. This part should include any tables or graphs displaying the findings in a relevant part of the text, not in an appendix. Describe and discuss them in the main report to provide evidence for the findings/conclusions. Follow the format guidelines of tables and graphs in EEG Part 5.

The discussion of the results should be well argued in relation to each research question or hypothesis. Inferences, projections, and probable explanations of the results should also be included. If any, discuss the implications of patterns and trends, and include any secondary findings.

This section should be soberly argued, especially when students are dealing with controversial or complex issues or concepts. Whenever a claim is made, it should be backed up with argument and evidence (whether from the research or that of others). The result of this discussion will give the students the main conclusions of their research (see below in 4.3.12).

Consultancy project primary findings should be related to wider academic materials in the submission to the institute. However, the separate submission to the client may not necessarily include this element.

4.3.12 Conclusions

This section should be a concise critical synthesis of the main findings of the research. Students need to demonstrate explicitly how and to what extent the research has achieved the aim(s) and objectives. Students may need to highlight and critically discuss any differences between the actual findings and what was expected to be found at the outset. Indicate how the research has helped to move issues/debates forward or has helped to redefine existing knowledge and concepts. The conclusions should follow logically from the findings and be supported by them. In particular, they should not contain anything new which was not in the findings.

4.3.13 Recommendations/Strategy (if any)

Where GA/FP results in recommendations or a suggested strategy, these should be appropriate, reasonable, and realistic. Some recommendations and strategies may have attached timelines and an indication of who is responsible for implementation. List them in a logical order and ensure they follow from the evidence and conclusions of the findings. Not all assignments will have recommendations; some will produce concluding statements/analyses of the phenomenon under investigation. Where appropriate, identify areas for further research.

For consultancy project the recommendations will form a crucial part of the project. The commissioner/client is seeking expert advice as to solutions or ways forward and will expect a series of recommendations, normally associated with a timeline as to when these need to be implemented in a logical order. Associated costing may be attached to each or some of the recommendations. Remember to keep recommendations feasible and grounded in the primary data.

4.3.14 References

References includes all references that were used in the research process. Any citation in the References must be cited at least once somewhere within the GA/FP. Do not 'pad out' the references with sources never cited with the text – this is an important academic convention that must be adhered to. References must be in the appropriate Harvard-Anglia Ruskin University (ARU Harvard) style. Details can be found in the Part 5A and 5B of the EEG.

4.3.15 Appendices

It is a must to include a copy of the original or modified, approved research proposal in the appendices. A GA/FP without the research proposal will be considered as incomplete.

As the research process evolves throughout the project, some students may find that they need to amend, add or change some of their objectives. This may be because issues that were not apparent have emerged during the in-depth literature review stage. This is acceptable as long as the Academic Supervisor is informed and approves any changes made.

The appendices can be used to present information which is too detailed to include in the main report and/or information that is interesting but not essential to the main thrust of the report. Examples include: an original copy of a questionnaire, and coding examples of some qualitative interviews.

The original data should NOT be put in the appendices. All interview transcripts, data files or observation transcripts etc. must be uploaded in the submission online area (see below the requirements of the original data). Students may also include the standard letter they have sent to the interviewees of their research. No interviewee personal data should be included.

Each appendix should be given a title, a letter (A, B, etc.) and the page numbering continues from the bibliography. They should be included on the contents list. Normally, students should not include brochures, photocopies of articles and in general material that were not written by them.

4.3.16 Original Data (to be submitted separately)

A GA/FP may involve original qualitative (e.g., interview transcripts), quantitative (e.g., survey data), or secondary data. Regardless of type, ensure data is well-organized with clear labels and a detailed codebook explaining sources, variables, and data cleaning procedures.

Submit all the primary (raw) data (interview transcripts, excel files for survey responses), secondary (processed) data, and codes and scripts to produce the final results in the GA/FP in a common format (e.g., txt, docx, SPSS, Excel) to the designated area, following specific storage and submission instructions. A text file describing the data files in relation to (corresponding sections of) the GA/FP needs to be included.

All file names, metadata and other description files and comment lines in code must be in English. If the transcripts are in another language, English translation of the text should be included. All the data files should be uploaded at the same time of uploading Chapters 1-4, and/or no later than submitting the Final Version GA/FP.

Any GA/FP without original data will NOT be accepted for assessment.

4.3.17 Extra notes for Consultancy assignments

The consultancy report should be written using the guidelines supplied for writing consultancy papers. The structure for writing a final GA/FPs follow a general format as outlined in this section of the handbook; however, this type of paper differs in some respects from a standard academic research paper. The structure and layout should reflect the contents enumerated in the guidelines for writing a consultancy report. Students should consult the Academic Supervisor if they have any doubts about what is required.

4.4 Referencing the Sources

References refer the reader to the source of specific information, ideas, quotes, figures, tables that have been used in the GA/FP. It is the responsibility of the students to make sure the information

provided for all the citations and references are correct and complete. All sources listed in the references must be cited at least once somewhere in the main text of the GA/FP; in other words, students should avoid listing the sources not clearly used. These must be included whenever anything drawn from other sources is used. It is looked upon very seriously if students do not reference the sources. Quoting a reference helps to support the point being made in the report. It indicates the basis for the opinions/arguments and clearly shows how these opinions were reached. Useful phrases include: "according to Smith (2007) many managers believe service quality.....", "research has revealed the importance of..... (Jones 1985; Peters 1997)", or "many academics (Jones 1997; Smith 2007; Zikmund 2009) debate the influence of globalisation...".

Wittenborg insists that students use the Harvard referencing system due to its simplicity and overall acceptance in academic writing. Check EEG Part 5 for the detailed requirements.

4.5 Technical Production Regulations

When submitting the GA/FP, it is extremely important that students follow certain technical requirements. These must be adhered to as otherwise a penalty may be enforced which can hinder their ability to pass the GA/FP.

- Two copies of the GA/FP have to be submitted to Wittenborg Education Department Office before 12 a.m. on the hand-in date; however, students are allowed to submit earlier at their discretion. Both copies of the GA/FP will be archived in the Wittenborg Library from the date of submission. All assignments must also be submitted online to the correct upload area on Wittenborg Online; this will also function as a plagiarism check. There will be instructions provided throughout the programme on how to submit their paper or documents on the intranet submission area, on Wittenborg-Online. This online submission can be used to check for other technical requirements, such as the word count.
- The document should be properly bound (no spiral binding) and printed on single sides of A4-sized paper. Either black and white or colour is acceptable. Creative output projects, that may include some visual artefact or portfolio, will require only one submission of this element, along with the two bound copies of the written Thesis.
- It should be typed in a reasonably sized font (e.g. font Times New Roman size 12 or Arial size 11) 1.5-spaced (except for indented quotations and footnotes).
- Lengthy quotations (exceeding 40 words) should be presented, indented, with clear spaces above and below the main text.
- Margins should be as follows: left (binding edge) 40mm / 1.5", right, top and bottom 25mm / 1". See the detailed guidelines in the GA/FP Checklist in Table 4.1.
- All costs associated with the assignment are borne by the student. If an organisation or individual does give the student a lot of help then it would normally be a courtesy for the student to send them a copy of the final project, or at least an executive summary.

5. OFFICIAL FRAMEWORK DEADLINES

5.1 Process and regulations.

NB: All work to be handed in by 4 p.m. (16:00 CET) on the due date, including Chapters 1-3 + questionnaire, Chapters 1-4, Final draft, the Clearance Form, and the original data.

The process begins during every block with Research Topic, and in Block October or 6, when the Research Methodology & Quantitative Methods module begins; from the beginning students need to start thinking about possible research topic areas that are appropriate for a bachelor-level GA/FP.

The GA/FP is marked by the Academic Supervisor of the student and second-marked by another external second marker from another institution/organisation. Finally, a sample of the marked projects is sent to the External Examiners for their assessment as a matter of quality control and assurance. The final stage of the assessment process is the Graduation & Examination Board (GEB).

Deliverables

- Research Proposal (RP)
The RP must be approved by the Academic Supervisor before students are allowed to start with their GA/FP.
- Chapters 1-3 plus questionnaire/data collection method/tool
 - Students need to have a formal approval from their Academic Supervisor on their data collection tool before they are allowed to start with the data collection.
 - There is no grade for this submission, only feedback from the Academic Supervisor.
- Chapters 1-4
 - There is no grade for this submission, only feedback from the Academic Supervisor.
- Final complete paper

5.2 Regulations for late submissions

Late submission of the GA/FP will NOT be accepted because all bachelor students can use the period of up to 3 blocks to complete their GA/FP. In case students miss the deadline of submitting their GA/FP, they can always submit it in the following submission opportunity. It is advisable to make a feasible study plan with the help of the process tutor and submit the GA/FP as early as possible to avoid any unnecessary delay. Refer to Section 11 for more information. "

5.3 Plagiarism

A formal session on plagiarism is held during the Introduction Week. Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. Whether intentional or unintentional, plagiarism is a form of cheating in which an individual gains or seeks to gain an unfair academic advantage. It includes the use of another author's words verbatim, summarising or paraphrasing another person's argument or line of thinking, or use of a particularly apt phrase without proper attribution. When working with ideas and concepts that are not familiar, the temptation for some students to lift words or sections of text from other sources is great. Write in one's own words because using the words or ideas of others without a reference (either using quotation marks and/or sourcing the author(s)) will lead to accusations of plagiarism. Learn about plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct in Part 5, 5A, and 5B of the EEG.

Academic Supervisors are generally familiar with differences between the writing styles of students and experienced authors. Turnitin, a software that monitors plagiarism and the use of AI writing tools, is available and used by the school to detect any suspected cases of academic misconduct such as plagiarism. The software compares the writing used within a thesis to other sources, for example, websites on the Internet, journal articles, books, and other student work from other universities.

Please remember that the generation of false data is also a serious academic offence. Students are required to upload all empirical data through Wittenborg-Online (see the section of "Original data"). Failure to upload these will result in a fail for the GA/FP as it is considered as incomplete.

Further details of the Turnitin submission are provided as part of the module workshop materials, and clear instructions will be provided under the project module on Wittenborg Online as to how and when to submit the GA/FP through Turnitin.

Note that self-plagiarism (submitting the same assignment for different courses) is also a form of plagiarism. If – irrespective of the outcome of Turnitin – there are doubts about whether or not the student is the original author of a piece of work, Wittenborg will insist on an additional oral hearing.

6. GA/FP CHECKLIST - FORMATTING AND SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

6.1 Manuscript Formatting and Submission Checklist

This checklist at the end of the general points is **very** important!

- I. Did you achieve sufficient ECs before submitting your GA/FP?
- II. Did you submit the Graduation Clearance Form before the deadline?
- III. Is your GA/FP paginated correctly?
- IV. Did you use your full and official name on the title page?
- V. Are the titles on the title and abstract pages exactly the same?
- VI. Are your margins correct?
- VII. Is the statement of originality of work and use of AI added on the "Acknowledgement" ?
- VIII. Did you add the wordcount. Does it meet the wordcount requirements?
- IX. Did you attach your approved RP as an appendix item?
- X. Did you upload your original data to the designated area before the deadline?
- XI. Did you submit two properly bound (tape binding only) copies of your GA/FP to the front desk before the deadline (See GA/FP planning in the GA/FP Handbook)?

6.2 GA/FP FORMATTING CHECKLIST

- ☐ **Order:** Title page, Abstract, Dedication (optional), Acknowledgement page (optional), Table of Contents, List of Tables, List of Figures, Manuscript, References, Appendices
- ☐ **Format:** Use the Harvard Style Referencing
- ☐ **Font:** 12-point type Times New Roman font, 11-point type Arial or 10-point Geneva or alike
- ☐ **Justification:** Left justified format is required (except for Title Page), do not use right or full justified margins
- ☐ **Margins:** Top, Right and Bottom margins 25mm/1", Left margin 40mm/1.5" to allow room for binding

- Title page, and first page of each chapter: Top Margin 50mm/2"
- **Page numbers:** bottom centre of each page, at least 20mm/3/4" from the edge of the paper.
 - Prefatory pages (Title Page, Abstract, Acknowledgements, Table of Contents, List of Tables, List of Figures) should be numbered with lower case Roman numerals.
 - The page number should be omitted from the Title Page; the second page (Abstract/Executive Summary) should be labelled i, ii, iii...
 - Main body pages are to be numbered using Arabic numerals. The first page of the main body text should start with 1.
 - Continue page numbering through all of the references and appendices.
- **Title page:** The title must be 10 words or less, and double spaced. The title begins from the top of the page. The date should be the month and year the manuscript is submitted for marking.
- **Abstract/Executive summary:** Abstract should be maximum of one page or less. Executive Summary should be 1-3 pages.
- **Acknowledgements page:** Optional page, see the requirements in GA/FP Handbook.
- **Table of contents, list of tables, list of figures:** double space, see the requirements in GA/FP Handbook.
- **Chapter headings:** Consult the GA/FP handbook for detailed information about how to label chapters. Begin chapters on a new page. Begin "CHAPTER 2" from the top of the page. Centre the word "CHAPTER" in all CAPS followed by the Roman Numeral of one, as follows: "CHAPTER I". Double space and centre the chapter title in all CAPS – **"INTRODUCTION"** Bold. Chapter subheadings should follow Harvard Headings guidelines.
- **Main body text:** Mostly 1.5-spaced with a few exceptions. Table/Figure headings and long quotes may be single spaced.
- **Paragraphs:** Wherever possible, avoid beginning a new paragraph at the bottom of a page or ending a paragraph at the top of a page, unless at least two lines of text can be included in each case.
- **Tables and figures:** The style of tables and figures should confirm to Harvard Style guidelines. Include Appendices in the Table of Contents. Tables and figures should be numbered consecutively starting within each chapter (e.g. Table 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, etc.). Table captions should be above the table, and figure captions should be directly under the image. Tables and figures need to be referred to in the text. If they are cited/quoted from other people's work, you need to include the citation in the captions. Otherwise, if you haven't used any external data or visuals to create the table/figure, the absence of a citation implies it's your own work. Check detailed requirements in EEG Part 5.
- **References:** Single-space references, following the ARU Harvard style. Use hanging indents (the first line begins at the margin and subsequent lines are indented).

- ☐ **Appendix:** Retain the same margins as in the rest of the GA/FP. Typeface should be the same or similar to what is used in the rest of the document.

6.3 Consultancy Report to-do list

1. Introduction
2. Letter of understanding (formulation of problem and Gap)
 - a. Consultation with client, and scope and objectives of the project
 - b. Clarify the objectives, and proposed deliverables are to be stated
 - c. Formulation of the problem and definition of the research question
 - d. Formulation of type of consultancy assignment
3. Analysis of problem and conceptual framework
 - a. Internal analysis
 - b. External analysis
 - c. Use of models/frameworks (e.g. BCG, INK, Change models, cost analysis models, Value chain models)
4. Literature review (see information under academic research)
5. Methodology and research methods (see information under academic research)
 - a. The type of consultancy assignment must be highlighted and explained
6. Timelines and milestones
7. Analysis and results (see section under academic research)
8. Conclusions and recommendations
9. References
10. Appendices

7. SUPERVISION OF THE GA/FP

Academic Supervisors are normally members of the academic staff. They will be allocated according to various criteria including their familiarity with the proposed topic, their knowledge of the relevant methodologies, their experience in conducting and supervising research projects, and their workloads. Each student is entitled to support from their supervisor. To ensure a diverse and inclusive learning environment, supervisors should aim to avoid taking more than half of their students from the same nationality as their own.

Supervisors will normally be supervising a number of students, so the total time available should, as far as possible, be divided equally between their supervisees. Academic Supervisors are allocated a maximum of **14 hours per student** for supervision that includes marking, communication, and attending oral defence. When using Academic Supervisor's time, use it wisely. This does not necessarily mean that supervisors will support their supervisees one-to-one; different Academic Supervisors and students prefer different methods, and very often the students will gain more from being part of a small Academic Supervisorial group than from one-to-one support, especially in the early stages of the research. It is the responsibility of students to make mutually agreeable research agenda and arrangements with their supervisor. Students can see other Academic Supervisors for advice; however, this is at the discretion of the other Academic Supervisors.

We strongly advise that students meet their supervisors regularly and together to follow a structured and planned approach to the dissertation along the lines that we are suggesting in this document. Students who do poorly on the dissertation are usually the ones who have failed to meet regularly with their supervisor, and who have not followed a systematic plan. Supervisors are advised to keep details of attendance for each supervisee. We strongly advise students to keep a similar record detailing what is discussed and the actions they need to take. The following highlights the standard level of supervision that students should receive from the school.

Academic Supervisor / Student Supervision

Students can expect the following level of supervision from their Academic Supervisor:

- Supervisors will make themselves available for appropriate Academic Supervisorial times in normal office hours during semester times (normally not during the Easter/Summer break periods as some supervisors will take annual leave at such times). Discuss supervisory research agenda and arrangements with the supervisor at the first meeting.
- If students choose to complete their project at a distance (i.e. you are unable to come into Wittenborg for supervisory meetings) this can impact upon the effectiveness of the support and guidance that supervisors will be able to offer. If they are planning to be away from the campus and unable to attend face-to-face, please liaise with your supervisor and agree on the support that they will be able to offer at a distance.
- Academic Supervisors will normally review in depth each chapter of the thesis. Students should submit a word-processed full draft of their chapters. Supervisors are normally expected to review the chapters once or twice, and should not be expected to keep reviewing re-submitted versions of the same chapters. It is the responsibility of the students to make sure all the suggestions are addressed in the revision of the chapters. Otherwise, they will be asked to revise sufficiently before moving on.
- Supervisors should normally review a chapter and return it to the student within a few working days with an appropriate level of feedback.
- Supervisors will provide constructive advice and guidance on appropriate research methodologies. It is expected that students will also attend relevant lectures to support their research as well as reviewing various research method texts.
- Supervisors will notify students in advance of any leave they wish to take during semester time. At various times, some supervisors may be out of the school for reasons such as attending conferences, placement visits and other business. If this absence results in the supervisor being out of the office during term time for more than 5 working days, the supervisor should make appropriate cover arrangements, and notify each student.

Supervisors can expect the following from each of their students:

- strive to start their graduation assignment/final project as soon as they enter phase 3 in order to be able to finish in a timely manner.
- develop a regular timeline for their final project process.
- inform supervisors with regard to their holiday plans and general availability throughout the research process.

- regular, punctual attendance at Academic Supervisorial meetings. Try to avoid "dropping in" to supervisor's offices and quickly asking for advice since the supervisor may need time to reflect on questions from the student.
- come fully prepared to Academic Supervisorial meetings, which means that they have read around the subject area, and/or have drafts of material that need to be consulted.
- make sure the assignment is fully revised according to the feedback from supervisors. Communicate in time with supervisors if there is any disagreement or confusion. Support all arguments with evidence from literature or authentic research. If students ignore the feedback of supervisors, they will be asked to refer to all previous comments and their GA/FP progress could be delayed.
- openly communicate with their supervisor on any other problems or fears with regard to their project.
- keep supervisors up to date with any problems that may interfere with the deadline or the successful completion of the thesis.

8. THE OFFICIAL PROCESS AND DEADLINES FOR GRADUATION

8.1 Graduation Clearance Form Guidelines

Students are NOT allowed to defend their GA/FP without a signed clearance form from the Registrar. The clearance form shows that a student has completed all the required exams except the GA/FP and paid all outstanding dues to the institution.

- The Clearance Form should be used as a standard graduation procedure. Please follow the instructions given in the online area with regards to the completing of this form.
- Once a student has submitted their GA/FP Clearance Form, the Exam Coordinator will submit their name to all the respective departments (Housing, Library, Registrar & Finance) for them to check and acknowledge in the Clearance Form. If there is any issue that needs to be settled, the student will be contacted by the respective department. Once the Clearance Form is completed and signed, the student's name will be added to the official GA/FP list for assessment and approval by the Graduation & Examination Board (GEB).
- If the student fails to submit his/her GA/FP before the deadline, and/or the clearance form is not approved, the name of the student will be removed from the GA/FP list. The student will need to fill in the Clearance Form again before the next submission.

8.2 The graduation process

After the approval of the GEB, the Oral Defense list will be prepared and sent to the students, Academic Supervisors and External Markers by 16:00 of Tuesday, Week 6.

- GA/FP Oral Defence is always planned on the Friday of Exam Week (Week 6), each block with the exception of retake blocks. If Friday is a national holiday, the Oral Defence session will be moved to the immediate working day in the same week. For example, if Friday is Good Friday (national holiday), the oral defence will be moved to Thursday of the same week.
- Students must be present **physically** for their Oral Defence at their respective study locations (Amsterdam or Apeldoorn). Munich students will need to be present physically at the Apeldoorn campus.
- Students must prepare two properly bound (NO SPIRAL BINDING) copies of their GA/FP after the release of the Oral Defence list and submit them before or on the day of the Oral Defence. They can hand them in to the Front Desk for Amsterdam students and to the Registrar's office for Apeldoorn and Munich students.
- Students should upload their Oral Defence presentation (PowerPoint or Prezi) on the online area by Wednesday of Week 6 after the release of the Oral Defence list. However, students are allowed to modify their presentation after uploading. Students should also send their presentations to their Academic Supervisor. The uploaded version of the presentation should contain a 30-second synopsis video, in which the student gives a short overview of the GA/FP.
- The Oral Defence proceeding is a public event and any individual can attend it (for example parents, family members, friends, employers, students etc.). However, they must not interfere with the proceeding.

- Students must be formally and decently attired for the Oral Defence. Slippers, Crocs, flip-flops, shorts, track suits/pants, Bermudas, T-shirts, Spaghetti-strap dress/blouse, caps, sunglasses etc. are strictly prohibited. Students may be denied the Oral Defence if they are not formally and decently attired.

Note: Students are requested to indicate if they would like to make use of any special arrangements/equipment for their Oral Defence presentation. They must arrange this through their academic supervisor and at least one week in advance of the Oral Defence.

9. Graduation Assignment /Final Project Planning

1. This GA/FP planning schedule is for full-time study in order to achieve attributed ECs. According to this planning, the students who are working full-time on their GA can complete it in time. Students working part-time, or completing any other study requirements, should consider extra time and must discuss this clearly with their Academic Supervisor and Process Tutor.
2. Only those students who have started their work before the summer (from Block May) can graduate in Block September.
3. Students should make sure that the submitted content is not a draft and/or final draft but the absolute final version, before they press the submission button on the deadline for submitting any part and/or final version GA.
4. Students must develop their own planning for each chapter of the GA, data collection and/or analysis to write initial draft versions. These drafts should be used to develop final versions which should be uploaded before the submission deadlines.
5. Students must submit two properly bound copies of their GA/FP at least 3 days before the presentation/oral defence of the GA/FP. You can hand them in at the Front Desk.
6. GA/FP oral defence is planned six times a year for both bachelor and master programmes during the final week of each block (except for retake blocks) and the schedule is published on the Wednesday of the final week of each block. These six possibilities are arranged along with the six Graduation and Examination Board meetings, during which the submitted GA/FPs are approved for oral defence after the evaluation from two examiners. There is no possibility to submit/defend the GA/FP outside these dates/deadlines. In case of failure to defend the GA/FP in the block where the GA/FP submission was successful, including absence due to unforeseen and inevitable reasons, students can submit/defend in the subsequent opportunity.
7. Block Weeks mentioned in this schedule are the standard 6 weeks of each block **excluding any Introduction Weeks (IW), Study Weeks (SW) and Catch-up Weeks** mentioned in any block in the year calendar. Please check the GA/FP module online area for the specific days and times for upload deadlines!
8. The Turnitin Upload area for GA Final Version of a block **CLOSES at 4 p.m. CET (16:00 Dutch Time) on the Monday of Week 4 of a block**. Once it is closed, it will become hidden to students and the upload area in the next block will open. If you miss the deadline you will need to submit in the next block's submission area.
9. Take note that if the deadline falls on a national holiday, it will be moved to the immediate (pre/post) working day in the same week. For example, if Monday is 2nd Easter

Day (national holiday), the submission deadline will be moved to Tuesday. The time of 16:00 remains the same.

10. Technical errors: Make sure that you attempt your upload well before the deadline. If there is an error, you are obliged to contact the Help Desk no later than 30 minutes before the deadline for help.
11. No feedback will be provided without uploading the report through the standard system. No submissions via email. Graduation Ceremonies (2 per academic year) are planned the 2nd week Friday of Retake Weeks Summer and Winter.

Graduation Opportunity 1, (Block September)		
Day	Block Week	Deadlines
Block May (previous academic year)		
Monday	Block May, Week 1	Approval of passed RP by the Academic Supervisor for the official start of GA
Monday	Block May, Week 3	Deadline for submission of final version Ch. 1 -3 including the Questionnaire
Friday	Block May, Week 4	Academic Supervisor Feedback on Ch. 1-3 + Meeting on Student Request if necessary
Monday	Block May, Week 6	Submission of Research Instruments/Framework, Model /Ethical Issues, etc., or Final draft of Chapter 1-4
Block September		
Friday	Block September, Week 1	2nd Feedback and/or Meeting on Student Request if necessary
	Block September, Week 2	Student working on Final Version based on feedback
	Block September, Week 3	
Monday	Block September, Week 4	Final Version Submission Deadline
Monday	Block September, Week 6	Approval Graduation & Examination Board (GEB)
Tuesday	Block September, Week 6	Approval for defence GEB + Oral Defence Schedule announcement
Friday	Block September, Week 6	Graduation Presentation

Graduation Opportunity 2, (Block October)

Day	Block Week	Deadlines
Block September		
Monday	Block September, Week 1	Approval of passed RP by the Academic Supervisor for the official start of GA
Monday	Block September, Week 3	Deadline for submission of final version Ch. 1 -3 including the Questionnaire
Friday	Block September, Week 4	Academic Supervisor Feedback on Ch. 1-3 + Meeting on Student Request if necessary
Monday	Block September, Week 6	Submission of Research Instruments/Framework, Model /Ethical Issues, etc., or Final draft of Chapter 1-4
Block October		
Friday	Block October, Week 1	2nd Feedback and/or Meeting on Student Request if necessary
	Block October, Week 2	Student working on Final Version based on feedback
	Block October, Week 3	
Monday	Block October, Week 4	Final Version Submission Deadline
Monday	Block October, Week 6	Approval Graduation & Examination Board (GEB)
Tuesday	Block October, Week 6	Approval for defence GEB + Oral Defence Schedule announcement
Friday	Block October, Week 6	Graduation Presentation

Graduation Opportunity 3, (Block December)

Day	Block Week	Deadlines
Block October		
Monday	Block October, Week 1	Approval of passed RP by the Academic Supervisor for the official start of GA
Monday	Block October, Week 3	Deadline for submission of final version Ch. 1 -3 including the Questionnaire
Friday	Block October, Week 4	Academic Supervisor Feedback on Ch. 1-3 + Meeting on Student Request if necessary
Monday	Block October, Week 6	Submission of Research Instruments/Framework, Model /Ethical Issues, etc., or Final draft of Chapter 1-4
Block December		
Friday	Block December, Week 1	2nd Feedback and/or Meeting on Student Request if necessary
	Block December, Week 2	Student working on Final Version based on feedback
	Block December, Week 3	

Monday	Block December, Week 4	Final Version Submission Deadline
Monday	Block December, Week 6	Approval Graduation & Examination Board (GEB)
Tuesday	Block December, Week 6	Approval for defence GEB + Oral Defence Schedule announcement
Friday	Block December, Week 6	Graduation Presentation

Graduation Opportunity 4, (Block February)

Day	Block Week	Deadlines
Block December		
Monday	Block December, Week 1	Approval of passed RP by the Academic Supervisor for the official start of GA
Monday	Block December, Week 3	Deadline for submission of final version Ch. 1 -3 including the Questionnaire
Friday	Block December, Week 4	Academic Supervisor Feedback on Ch. 1-3 + Meeting on Student Request if necessary
Monday	Block December, Week 6	Submission of Research Instruments/Framework, Model /Ethical Issues, etc., or Final draft of Chapter 1-4
Block February		
Friday	Block February, Week 1	2nd Feedback and/or Meeting on Student Request
	Block February, Week 2	Student working on Final Version based on feedback
	Block February, Week 3	
Monday	Block February, Week 4	Final Version Submission Deadline
Monday	Block February, Week 6	Approval Graduation & Examination Board (GEB)
Tuesday	Block February, Week 6	Approval for defence GEB + Oral Defence Schedule announcement
Friday	Block February, Week 6	Graduation Presentation

Graduation Opportunity 5, (Block April)

Day	Block Week	Deadlines
Block February		
Monday	Block February, Week 1	Approval of passed RP by the Academic Supervisor for the official start of GA
Monday	Block February, Week 3	Deadline for submission of final version Ch. 1 -3 including the Questionnaire
Friday	Block February, Week 4	Academic Supervisor Feedback on Ch. 1-3 + Meeting on Student Request if necessary
Monday	Block February, Week 6	Submission of Research Instruments/Framework, Model /Ethical Issues, etc., or Final draft of Chapter 1-4
Block April		
Friday	Block April, Week 1	2nd Feedback and/or Meeting on Student Request if necessary

	Block April, Week 2	Student working on Final Version based on feedback
	Block April, Week 3	
Monday	Block April, Week 4	Final Version Submission Deadline
Monday	Block April, Week 6	Approval Graduation & Examination Board (GEB)
Tuesday	Block April, Week 6	Approval for defence EB + Presentation Schedule announcement
Friday	Block April, Week 6	Graduation Presentation

Graduation Opportunity 6, (Block May)

Day	Block Week	Deadlines
Block April		
Monday	Block April, Week 1	Approval of passed RP by the Academic Supervisor for the official start of GA
Monday	Block April, Week 3	Deadline for submission of final version Ch. 1 -3 including the Questionnaire
Friday	Block April, Week 4	Academic Supervisor Feedback on Ch. 1-3 + Meeting on Student Request if necessary
Monday	Block April, Week 6	Submission of Research Instruments/Framework, Model /Ethical Issues, etc., or Final draft of Chapter 1-4
Block May		
Friday	Block May, Week 1	2nd Feedback and/or Meeting on Student Request if necessary
	Block May, Week 2	Student working on Final Version based on feedback
	Block May, Week 3	
Monday	Block May, Week 4	Final Version Submission Deadline
Monday	Block May, Week 6	Approval Graduation & Examination Board (GEB)
Tuesday	Block May, Week 6	Approval for defence GEB + Oral Defence Schedule announcement
Friday	Block May, Week 6	Graduation Presentation

Note: Take note that if the deadline falls on a national holiday, it will be moved to the immediate (pre/post) working day in the same week. For example, if Monday is 2nd Easter Day (national holiday), the submission deadline will be moved to Tuesday. The time of 16:00 remains the same.

10. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

10.1 Assessment criteria for the Academic research graduation assignment

Academic Supervisor

Assessment Criteria and Feedback Academic Dissertation 2021/22 (Please highlight appropriate criteria) PREMODERATION

Graduation Assignment / Final Project					
Student name:		S number:		Programme/Pathway	
Academic Supervisor:				Year / Block	
Criteria/Grade	Design and conceptualisation of project	Intellectual engagement, knowledge and understanding	Methodology and research methods	Analysis and Evaluation	Structure, organisation and presentation
0 – 54% Unsatisfactory - inadequate (Fail)	Unsatisfactory and inadequate research design and conceptualisation, very weak / very limited engagement with theory. Unsatisfactory and inadequate attempt to expand, redefine and/ or contribute to existing knowledge/ practice. Aims and objectives are insufficiently grounded in the wider literature. Design and conceptualization of the research demonstrates a very poor level of understanding within the confines of the project's aims and objectives and in relation to the expectations for the level of study.	Unsatisfactory and inadequate understanding of and engagement with theory, frameworks and debates. Inadequate recognition of seminal works, chronology and contested aspects of the wider literature, providing an unsatisfactory grounding for the aims, objectives, research approach and methods of the study. Significant inaccuracies and / or misunderstandings evident. Inadequate identification of gaps in knowledge.	Inadequate justification for and explanation of methods adopted with insufficient links made to the literature review and research questions. Very weak / unsatisfactory recognition of limitations, potential bias and ethical issues.	Analysis, synthesis, evaluation and appraisal of the outcomes/ findings of the research are purely descriptive demonstrating inadequate understanding of reflectivity in relation to the theoretical and conceptual frameworks adopted. Analysis of the research outcomes / findings is inadequate within the context of the original aims and objectives of the project. Inadequate conclusions and/ or recommendations discussed to an unsatisfactory level within the context of the outcomes / findings. Inadequate recognition of limitations and areas for further enquiry.	Very poor standard of organisation, structure and presentation of the project. Very poor standard of written and/or visual communication. Very poor compliance and adherence to established protocols for academic writing (e.g. Harvard referencing, bibliography). Some serious grammatical errors and omissions in the references / bibliography.
55 – 64% Adequate to sound	Adequate to sound research design and conceptualisation, which engages with theory. Standard to limited attempt to expand, redefine and/ or contribute to existing knowledge/ practice. Aims and objectives are grounded in the wider literature to an adequate / sound level. Design and conceptualization of the research demonstrates an adequate to sound critical approach within the confines of the project's aims and objectives.	Adequate to sound understanding of and engagement with theory, frameworks and debates. Some contextualisation and recognition of seminal works, chronology and contested aspects of the wider literature but heavy reliance on a limited number of sources providing a standard grounding for the aims, objectives, research approach and methods of the study. Standard identification of gaps in knowledge.	A standard justification for and explanation of methods adopted with links made to the literature review and research questions. Standard recognition of limitations, potential bias and ethical issues.	Some but limited evidence of analysis, synthesis, evaluation and appraisal of the outcomes / findings of the research demonstrating some understanding of reflectivity when drawing on appropriate theoretical and conceptual frameworks. Research outcomes / findings are discussed to a standard level within the context of the original aims and objectives of the project. Sound conclusions and/ or recommendations discussed to a standard level within the context of the outcomes / findings. Standard recognition of limitations and areas for further enquiry.	Suitable organisation, structure and presentation of the project. Sound written and/or visual communication. Standard compliance and adherence to established protocols for academic writing (e.g. Harvard referencing, bibliography). Some minor grammatical errors and omissions in the references/bibliography.
65-74% Good to very good	Good to very good research design and conceptualisation, with potential to expand, redefine and/ or contribute to existing knowledge/ practice. Aims and objectives are grounded in the wider literature to a good to very good level and have generally been achieved to a good to very good standard. Design and conceptualization of the research is at times ambitious with good evidence of a critical approach within the confines of the project's aims and objectives.	Good to very good engagement with theory, frameworks and debates. Clear and at times insightful recognition of seminal works, chronology and contested aspects of the wider literature, providing a very good grounding for the aims, objectives, research approach and methods of the study. Good to very good identification of gaps in knowledge.	Good to very good justification for methods adopted, with clearly discussed and explained in the context of the literature review and research questions. Good to very good recognition of limitations, potential bias and ethical issues.	Good to very good quality analysis, synthesis, evaluation and appraisal of the outcomes/ findings of the research demonstrating very good level of reflectivity when drawing on appropriate theoretical and conceptual frameworks. Research outcomes / findings are discussed to a very good level within the context of the original aims and objectives of the project. Conclusions and/ or recommendations are discussed to a good to very good level within the context of the outcomes / findings. Good to very good, informed recognition of limitations and areas for further enquiry.	Good to very good organisation, structure and presentation of the project. Good to very good quality written and/or visual communication. Good to very good compliance and adherence to established protocols for academic writing (e.g. Harvard referencing, bibliography). Few grammatical errors and isolated omissions in the references/bibliography.
75 – 84% Excellent	An excellent research design and conceptualization, which expands, redefines and/ or contributes to existing knowledge/ practice to a very high level. Aims and objectives are	In depth understanding and engagement with theory, frameworks and debates in a convincing narrative form. Excellent recognition of seminal	Excellent justification for methods adopted, clearly and critically discussed and explained in the context of the literature review and research	High to very high-quality critical analysis, synthesis, evaluation and appraisal of the outcomes/ findings of the research demonstrating an excellent level of reflectivity when drawing on appropriate theoretical and	Excellent organisation, structure and presentation of the project. Excellent written and/or visual communication. Excellent compliance and adherence to established protocols for academic writing (e.g. Harvard referencing, bibliography). No

	critically grounded in the wider literature and have been achieved to an excellent level. Design and conceptualization of the research is ambitious with excellent evidence of a critical approach within the confines of the project's aims and objectives.	works, chronology and contested aspects of the wider literature, providing an excellent grounding for the aims, objectives, research approach and methods of the study. Excellent identification of gaps in knowledge.	questions. Methods adopted are appropriate for the research questions, with excellent recognition of limitations, potential bias and ethical issues.	conceptual frameworks. Research outcomes / findings are convincingly discussed in the context of the original aims and objectives of the project. Conclusions and/ or recommendations are discussed to an excellent level within the context of the outcomes / findings. Excellent recognition of limitations and areas for further enquiry.	/ few grammatical errors or omissions in the references/bibliography.
85-100% Outstanding	Outstanding research design and conceptualization, which clearly expands, redefines and/ or contributes to existing knowledge/ practice. Aims and objectives are critically grounded in the wider literature and have been achieved to an exceptional level. Design and conceptualization of the research is extremely coherent, ambitious and original with outstanding evidence of a critical approach within the confines of the project's aims and objectives.	Exceptional critical engagement with theory, frameworks and debates in a stimulating and rigorous narrative form. Exceptional recognition of seminal works, chronology and contested aspects of the wider literature, providing an outstanding grounding for the aims, objectives, research approach and methods of the study. Outstanding understanding of the gaps in knowledge.	Outstanding justification for methods adopted, clear and critically explained demonstrating a sophisticated very high-quality level of analysis in the context of the literature review and research questions. Methods adopted are appropriate for the research questions, with exemplary recognition of limitations, potential bias and ethical issues.	Outstanding critical analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of the outcomes/ findings of the research, demonstrating an exceptional level of reflectivity when drawing on appropriate theoretical and conceptual frameworks. Research outcomes / findings have been critically and comprehensively discussed in the context of the original aims and objectives of the project. Conclusions and/ or recommendations are discussed to an exceptional level within the context of the outcomes / findings. Outstanding recognition of limitations and areas for further enquiry.	Exceptional organisation, structure and presentation of the project. Outstanding written and/or visual communication with exceptional narrative style and structure. Exemplary compliance and adherence to established protocols for academic writing (e.g. Harvard referencing, bibliography) No / few grammatical errors or omissions in the references/bibliography.
Academic supervisor comments, written justification for the mark (min 100 words):					
Pre-moderation Mark (on a scale of 0-10):			Date:		
Checks: (thick the boxes)					
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 60%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Word count; Declaration of originality; Research Proposal (in Appendix) are included </div> <div style="width: 35%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Clearance form is uploaded (On-line area) </div> </div>					

10.2. Assessment criteria for Consultancy Project

Academic Supervisor

Assessment Criteria and Feedback Consultancy Report 2021/22 (Please highlight appropriate criteria)

PREMODERATION

Graduation Assignment / Final Project								
Student name:			S number:		Programme/Pathway :			
Academic Supervisor:			Year Block:					
Criteria	Letter of understanding Formulations of problem and Gap 1. Consultation with client and scope and objectives of the project 2. Clarity with which the objectives and proposed deliverables are stated 3. Formulation of the problem and (definition of the research question) 4. Formulation of type of consultancy assignment	Analysis of problem and conceptual framework 1. Internal analysis 2. External analysis (Use of models/frameworks etc. BCG, INK, Change models, cost analysis models, Value chain models)	Literature Review 1. Existing literature 2. Related research	Methodology and research methods 1. The type of consultancy assignment needs to be properly defined and the how of the plan needs to be fully developed	Managing the project (Timelines and milestones)	Analysis and Results	Conclusion and recommendations	Structure, organisation and presentation
0 – 54% Unsatisfactory - inadequate (Fail)	Unsatisfactory and inadequate understanding of the problem or gap under review. Unsatisfactory and inadequate attempt to expand, redefine and/ or contribute to existing knowledge/ practice. Aims and objectives are insufficiently grounded in the wider literature. Design and conceptualization of the research demonstrates a very poor level of understanding within the confines of the project's aims and objectives and in relation to the expectations for the level of study.	Unsatisfactory and inadequate understanding of the problem or the relevant conceptual frameworks. Unsatisfactory and inadequate internal and external analysis and unsatisfactory and inadequate linkage to conceptual frameworks and models. Inadequate identification of gap/s in knowledge.	Unsatisfactory and inadequate understanding of and engagement with theory, frameworks and debates. Inadequate recognition of seminal works, chronology and contested aspects of the wider literature, providing an unsatisfactory grounding for the aims, objectives, research approach and methods of the study. Significant inaccuracies and / or misunderstandings evident. Inadequate identification of gaps in knowledge.	Inadequate justification for and explanation of methodology and methods adopted with insufficient links made to the literature review and research questions. Very weak / unsatisfactory recognition of limitations, potential bias and ethical issues.	Unsatisfactory and inadequate description of the evaluation process: planning, data collection, data analysis, reporting, facilitation of use, reporting and handling.	Analysis, synthesis, evaluation and appraisal of the outcomes/ findings of the research are purely descriptive demonstrating inadequate understanding of reflectivity in relation to the theoretical and conceptual frameworks adopted. Analysis of the research outcomes / findings is inadequate within the context of the original aims and objectives of the project.	Very poor conclusions and/ or recommendations discussed to an inadequate / limited level within the context of the outcomes / findings. Unsatisfactory recognition of limitations and areas for further enquiry.	Poor standard of organisation, structure and presentation of the project. Poor standard of written and/or visual communication. Poor compliance and adherence to established protocols for academic writing (e.g. Harvard referencing, bibliography). Some significant grammatical errors and omissions in the references / bibliography.

55 – 64% Adequate to sound	Adequate to sound understanding of the problem or gap under review. Standard to limited attempt to expand, redefine and/ or contribute to existing knowledge/ practice. Aims and objectives are grounded in the wider literature to an adequate / sound level. Design and conceptualization of the research demonstrates an adequate to sound critical approach within the confines of the project's aims and objectives.	Adequate to sound understanding of the problem/s and relevant conceptual framework/s. Some understanding of the internal and external context and the relevant models applicable. Some linkage to relevant frameworks and models. Standard identification of gaps in knowledge.	A basic justification for and understanding of and engagement with theory, frameworks and debate. Adequate recognition of seminal works, chronology and contested aspects of the wider literature, providing a satisfactory grounding for the aims, objectives, research approach and methods of the study. Some inaccuracies and / or misunderstandings evident. Adequate identification of gaps in knowledge.	Sufficient justification and explanation of methodology and methods adopted, with sufficient links made to the literature review and research questions. Adequate recognition of limitations, potential bias and ethical issues.	Sufficient description of the evaluation process: planning, data collection, data analysis, reporting, facilitation of use, reporting and handling.	Analysis, synthesis, evaluation and appraisal of the outcomes/ findings of the research are adequate demonstrating sufficient understanding of reflectivity in relation to the theoretical and conceptual frameworks adopted. Analysis of the research outcomes / findings is sufficient within the context of the original aims and objectives of the project.	Adequate conclusions and/ or recommendations discussed to an satisfactory level within the context of the outcomes / findings. Satisfactory recognition of limitations and areas for further enquiry.	Sufficient standard of organisation, structure and presentation of the project. Adequate standard of written and/or visual communication. Basic compliance and adherence to established protocols for academic writing (e.g. Harvard referencing, bibliography). Some grammatical errors and omissions in the references / bibliography.
65-74% Good to very good	Good to very good research design and conceptualisation, with potential to expand, redefine and/ or contribute to existing knowledge/ practice. Aims and objectives are grounded in the wider literature to a good to very good level and have generally been achieved to a good to very good standard. Design and conceptualization of the research is at times ambitious with good evidence of a critical approach within the confines of the project's aims and objectives.	Good to very good understanding of the problem/s and relevant conceptual framework/s. Good understanding of the internal and external context and the relevant models applicable. Good to very good linkage to relevant frameworks and models. Above average identification of gap/s in knowledge.	Good to very good justification for and understanding of theory framework's and debate. Good recognition of seminal works, chronology and contested aspects of the wider literature, providing a sound grounding for the aims and objectives, research approach and methods of the study. Few inaccuracies and / or misunderstandings evident. Good identification of gaps in knowledge.	Good to very good explanation of methodology and methods adopted, with sufficient links made to the literature review and research questions. Adequate recognition of limitations, potential bias and ethical issues.	Good to very good description of the evaluation process: planning, data collection, data analysis, reporting, facilitation of use, reporting and handling.	Good to very good quality analysis, synthesis, evaluation and appraisal of the outcomes/ findings of the research demonstrating a good level of reflectivity with regards to, appropriate theoretical and conceptual frameworks. Research outcomes / findings are discussed at a reasonably high level within the context of the original aims and objectives of the project.	Good conclusions and/ or recommendations discussed to a reasonably high level within the context of the outcomes / findings. Good to very good, informed recognition of limitations and areas for further enquiry.	Good to very good organisation, structure and presentation of the project. High standard of written and/or visual communication. Good compliance and adherence to established protocols for academic writing (e.g. Harvard referencing, bibliography). Few grammatical errors and omissions in the references / bibliography.

11. MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES

11.1 Mitigating Circumstances

During their studies, students may have certain times when circumstances prevent them from performing to the best of their ability. This could be due to family problems, close personal bereavement, or illness. In the first instance, this should be discussed with their Academic Supervisor and Process Tutor and who will advise them. See detailed definition of the circumstances in EEG Part 12.

11.2 Regulations Concerning Mitigating Circumstances

As with all modules, the GA/FP is covered by the general assessment regulations concerning mitigating circumstances. If students feel that the progress or the quality of their GA/FP is being affected by adverse circumstances (for example, prolonged debilitating illness, or stress due to unavoidable personal circumstances), the student can apply for an extension and submit their GA/FP in the next opportunity.

Students need to discuss with/report to their Academic Supervisors and process tutors about their adverse circumstances and the possibility of extensions **AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE**. They should be able to foresee if they require an extension well in advance of the submission deadline (usually at least a week before). Normally students will be required to produce evidence that they have suffered from adverse circumstances. They must take the application with your supporting evidence to your Process Tutor and inform your Academic Supervisor.

Normally, deadline must not be missed. If, due to exceptional circumstances, you are unable to meet the deadline, you may request an extension using the 'Special Request/Mitigating Circumstances Form', available in the Student Resources online area. Supporting evidence will normally be required when applications for extensions are made, such as a medical certificate, doctor's letter, death certificate, etc. The Exam Board is the only body which can authorise extensions. You may wish to make an appointment with your Academic Supervisor, who can also help you complete the application and ensure that you have the relevant evidence.

Requests for extensions should normally be submitted in advance, at least three full working days before the deadline date. You must take the application with your supporting evidence to your Academic Supervisor.

11.3 Retake of Remaining Module under Mitigating Circumstances

On condition that a student has a mitigating circumstance and/or a minimum of 210 ECs (Bachelor's), a request can be made for a retake under mitigating circumstances if the remaining module is NOT within the block (s) prior to Graduation. A maximum of 2 modules can be requested.

A student is permitted to do a retake under mitigating circumstances only once. Otherwise, it reverts to the normal planning of the module and assessments/retakes.

A retake under mitigating circumstances can only be done when a student has attempted the normal exam (1st attempt) and achieved above 4 in one of the earlier attempts. Otherwise, if the students have

achieved less than 4 in all previous attempts, or have attempted 2 or 3 retakes, they will be required to reattend the whole module instead of retaking the exam under mitigating circumstances. In special cases (at the student's written request) the Graduation & Examination Board may decide otherwise.

Retake under mitigating circumstances requests should be submitted no later than Week 1 of the block before the planned graduation with the approval of the GEB, i.e. if a student plans to graduate in Block October, they need to attend the special seat in Block September. The request has to be submitted in Week 1 of Block September.

A request for a special seat must be done by completing the "Retake of remaining module/Mitigating Circumstances Form" is available in the Students Resources online area.

9.3 Late Submission

Late submission is not normally condoned unless there are significant reasons ('mitigating circumstances'), and supported by written evidence. This includes absence from an assessment, failure to submit or undertake work, failure to submit work by the deadline, or poor performance.

The deadline date for submission of claims for mitigation is the last Thursday of the Block. If you hand work in late (that is, after the deadline, or the extended deadline if one was granted), the assignment receives a 'zero' mark. However, for the student's information, the Academic Supervisor will write the actual mark the work would have received (had it not been late) on the GA marking sheet.

9.11.4 Waiver of Tuition Fee

A student will be granted a waiver in the tuition fee of one block maximum only once in case of failure in their GA/FP. This waiver is NOT applicable in case of the following circumstances:

- Incomplete and/or unqualified GA/FP
- Students who missed any of the three submission deadlines – deadline for Chapter 1-3, Chapter 1-4 and final version of GA/FP.
- Failed GA/FP due to academic misconduct

Incomplete GA/FP is defined by the following conditions:

1. Any of the core parts as listed in Table 4.1 is missing
2. The word count is more than 20% below the minimum requirement

Unqualified GA/FP is defined by the following conditions:

1. Students do NOT meet the criteria for graduation outlined in EEG Part 8 (for example, insufficient ECs, missing MEEs results, missing PDP results, missing language results etc.)
2. Any parts of the GA/FP is not checked or approved by the Academic Supervisor

Note: As per these regulations, the waiver or non-waiver must be approved by the GEB.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 RESEARCH ETHICS FORMS

This segment must be read alongside:

- BERA Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research. National Ethics Council for Social and Behavioural Sciences.
- Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity.

How to use.

If you answer 'YES' to any of the questions in Section A, please, provide an outline of how the potential risks will be addressed against the question number in Section B.

The Academic Supervisor (Tier 1) will use this information to assess whether the risks are insignificant enough, or could be mitigated, to enable the research to proceed with Tier 1 ethical approval, or whether the proposal needs to be referred to Head Academic Supervision (Tier 2), or Head of School (Tier 3) or the Wittenborg Graduation and Examination Board (Tier 4).

Use checklist C to confirm that ethical issues regarding research participants have been identified and addressed appropriately. Based on the information of sections A, B and C the "Consent form" is created. Checklist E provides an overview for accompanying documents.

Students must receive ethical approval before starting to collect data (Section D).

SECTION A: ETHICAL RISK ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Please, tick YES or NO for each question. If you have answered YES to any of questions 1 to 15, please, provide a brief outline of how these risks will be addressed in the relevant part of the box in Section B or give details of any existing protocols within the Wittenborg that already cover these specific issues.

#	Question	Yes/No
1	Will participants be likely to undergo vigorous physical activity, prolonged or repetitive testing, or to experience physical harm, more than minimal pain or discomfort or exposure to dangerous situations/environments as part of the research?	Yes/No
2	Does the study involve any physiological or psychological interventions with the potential to be invasive, intrusive or harmful (e.g. administration of drugs or other substances; taking samples of blood, saliva, urine, etc.; use of equipment to monitor bodily performance; manual handling of participants; techniques such as hypnotherapy)?	Yes/No
3	Will the study involve participants who could be considered vulnerable (for example due to age, psychological or medical condition, social inequality), or <u>where possible coercion or feelings of obligation to participate may exist</u> (e.g. when recruiting one's own students or <u>colleagues</u>)?	Yes/No
4	Will the study involve the discussion of sensitive topics (for example, painful reflections or traumas, religious or other beliefs, sexual behaviour, experience of violence, abuse or bullying, illness, illegal or political behaviour, people's gender or ethnic status, detailed financial matters, issues relating to body image)?	Yes/No
5	Could participants experience psychological or emotional stress, anxiety, humiliation or other negative consequences, beyond what would be expected to be encountered in normal life?	Yes/No
6	Will it be necessary for participants to take part in the study without their knowledge at the time (e.g. covert observation or recording of people in non- public places), or involve deception or conduct of the research without participants' full and informed consent?	Yes/No

7	Will the research require the co-operation or permission of an individual or gatekeeper in order to gain access to participants (e.g. a teacher at a school, a manager of sheltered housing, the organiser of a self-help group, etc.)?	Yes/No
8	Will the research involve access to records of a confidential or personal nature, or documents of a sensitive political, moral, medical or religious nature?	Yes/No
9	Will the research involve collecting visual information of a personal nature, such as taking photographs or making video recordings of participants?	Yes/No
10	Will the research involve accessing participants or data of a personal nature via an online environment or internet setting (e.g. chat rooms, social media, instant messaging, etc.)?	Yes/No
11	Will financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants?	Yes/No
12	Does the research have the potential for causing significant negative impact on the environment (including animal or plant populations, or rare or protected species, habitats or sites)?	Yes/No
13	Might the research raise specific ethical issues regarding cultural/political sensitivities (e.g. local customs or gatekeepers, political sensitivities)?	Yes/No
14	Might the research involve the disclosure of confidential information beyond the initial consent given?	Yes/No
15	Are there any other ethical issues that are not covered in the questions above?	Yes/No

SECTION B: ADDRESSING POTENTIAL RISK

To be completed only if one or more questions in section A above have been answered as 'YES'.

If you have answered 'YES' to any of the questions in Section A above, please, provide an outline of how the potential risks will be addressed against the question number. The Academic Supervisor (Tier 1) will use this information to assess whether the risks are insignificant enough, or could be mitigated, to enable the research to proceed with Tier 1 ethical approval, or whether the proposal needs to be referred to Head Academic Supervision (Tier 2), and ultimately the Wittenborg Graduation & Examination Board (Tier 3).

Please, outline potential risks and how they will be addressed.

Question in section A	Outline potential risks and how they will be addressed	Yes/No
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		

11		
12		
13		
14		
15		

Some researchers may carry out research that involves types of risk on a routine basis (e.g. manual handling of participants or working with specific hazardous substances, involving children as participants in a school setting, taking photographs or videos of participants), and may already have specific protocols that cover procedures and guidelines for dealing with these risks. If activities to be undertaken in the proposed project are covered by such a protocol, please, provide details below.

Where the research is covered by such a protocol and does not raise any additional ethical issues it does not need to be considered at Tier 2.

Additional details: <...add, when applicable...>

SECTION C: CHECKLIST ETHICAL ISSUES RELATING TO RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Please use the checklist below to confirm that ethical issues regarding research participants have been identified and addressed appropriately.

#	Statements	Yes	N/A
1	Participants will be fully informed regarding the purpose of the study and their participation in it.		
2	It will be made clear to participants that their participation is voluntary, and they may withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason.		
3	Consent will be obtained from participants for taking part in the study.		
4	Recruitment materials (including posters, leaflets and emails), information sheets, consent forms, questionnaires or letters provide sufficient and accurate information, and have been clearly written and presented in a format suitable for the target audience.		
5	Where the research is likely to involve participants, who might not understand English, arrangements will be made for translation of materials and/or provision of interpreters as appropriate.		
6	Appropriate arrangements have been made to consider anonymity, confidentiality and privacy of participants.		
7	Appropriate arrangements have been made for the collection, handling and storage of electronic and/or physical data.		

SECTION D: ACADEMIC SUPERVISOR SIGN-OFF (FOR STUDENT RESEARCH ONLY)

I confirm that I have checked the application and that:

- ☐ the student has addressed the relevant ethical issues,
- ☐ the student has the necessary skills and experience to carry out the proposed research and has been trained in ethics as part of their course,
- ☐ this is a practicable and worthwhile research project, appropriate to the level of study.

Academic Supervisor: _____ Date: _____

SECTION E: CHECKLIST FOR ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTS

Please add these documents to this document (do not upload these as separate files).

Please ensure you have attached copies of any of the following documents where relevant:

- ☐ Information sheet
- ☐ Consent form
- ☐ Advertising or recruitment materials
- ☐ Sample questionnaires or interview questions
- ☐ Risk assessment forms. Note: See sections A, B, C
- ☐ Letters of support from external organisations involved in the research
- ☐ List of references

Submit this form in accordance with the instructions at the beginning of this document.

Student applicants: If you have answered 'no' to all the questions in Section C, or the work is covered by an approved Wittenborg protocol, this form may be submitted with the student dissertation or project outline. If you have answered 'yes' to one or more of the questions in Section D, please return this form and all accompanying documentation to the Academic Supervisor.

Wittenborg Staff applicants:

Please return this form and accompanying documentation to Wittenborg Head of Research.

CONSENT FORM

The research project to reflect the scope of the participation for which consent is being sought:

<...add title...>

	Please initial or tick box
I agree to take part in this research, which is to answer: <...add text...>	
The researcher has explained to my satisfaction the purpose, principles and procedures of the study and the possible risks involved.	
I have read the information sheet and I understand the principles, procedures and possible risks involved.	
I am aware that I will be required to participate in <...add description...>, that is part of the research project. As well as, to answer questions by means of <...add research methods...>. The researcher will make use of <...add additional research methods, and/or technologies...>, of which I am aware.	
I understand how the data collected will be used, and that any confidential information will normally be seen only by the researchers and will not be revealed to anyone else.	
I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason and without incurring consequences from doing so.	
I agree that should I withdraw from the study, the data collected up to that point may be used by the researcher for the purposes described in the information sheet. Where there is a possibility, data may be reused or shared in accordance with Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences Data Protection Policy (ref. GDPR).	
I agree that data collected may subsequently be archived and used by other bona fide researchers.	

Name

Signed

Date

APPENDIX 2 NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT (NDA) FOR STUDENT RESEARCH PROJECT (A TEMPLATE)

Parties:

1. **University:** Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences (shortened as Wittenborg in the following), The Netherlands
2. **Organization:** [Name of Organization]

Recitals:

1. Wittenborg is engaged in research activities, including student research projects.
2. The Organization is interested in collaborating with Wittenborg on a specific research project.
3. To protect the confidential information exchanged between the Parties, it is necessary to establish a non-disclosure agreement.

Agreement:

Definitions:

1. **Confidential Information:** Any information disclosed by one Party to the other Party, whether in written, oral, or electronic form, that is designated as confidential or should reasonably be understood to be confidential.
2. **Obligation of Confidentiality.** Wittenborg can confirm that we can accommodate the confidentiality regarding the project organisation, as follows:
 - The Graduation Assignment/Final Project (GA/FP) will not be published online for a maximum confidentiality period of two years, if the Organization wishes to impose a temporary embargo.
 - The GA/FP research proposal and the final graduation assignment will be sent as paper copies (2 copies) by secure post to arrive by the deadline;
 - Only the first (Wittenborg Academic Supervisor), one external second reader (Wittenborg Second Marker), and the GA/FP oral defence panel member will read the GA/FP research proposal and the graduation assignment, as well as one additional internal reader, the secretary to the Examination Board, only;
 - The graduation assignment copies will NOT be openly available under the temporary embargo after all the grading is done following the Wittenborg Examination Board and appeal period.
 - The name of the company and individuals to be interviewed will be changed in the account and will stay anonymous;

- Documents submitted will be clearly marked as 'COMPANY CONFIDENTIAL AND NOT TO BE HELD ON FILE' on all sheets;
- This email is to be added as an enclosure to the GA/FP.

Exceptions: Confidential Information does not include information that:

- is already publicly known or becomes publicly known through no fault of the receiving Party;
- is independently developed by the receiving Party without the use of the disclosing Party's Confidential Information;
- is required to be disclosed by law or court order.

Term and Termination:

- This Agreement shall commence on the date of execution and continue until terminated after a maximum confidentiality period of two years.
- Either Party may terminate this Agreement immediately upon written notice if the other Party breaches any of its obligations under this Agreement.

Governing Law and Jurisdiction:

- This Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the local laws.
- Any dispute arising out of or in connection with this Agreement shall be submitted to the exclusive jurisdiction of the local courts.

The Parties have executed this Agreement as of the date first written above.

[Signature of Wittenborg Representative]
[Name of Wittenborg Representative]
[Title of Wittenborg Representative]

[Signature of Organization Representative]
[Name of Organization Representative]
[Title of Organization Representative]

APPENDIX 3– DECLARATION ON THE USE OF AI IN GA/FP

In the creation of my GA/FP, I have used the following AI tool(s)/system(s):

1. [name of the AI tool/system] in [the step of GA/FP] as incorporated in [number of the GA/FP chapter]
2. [name of the AI tool/system] in [the step of GA/FP] as incorporated in [number of the GA/FP chapter]
3. ...

I declare that I have

- ☐ Familiarised myself the capabilities and limitations of the AI tool(s)/system(s) listed above,

- ☐ Marked all AI-generated content within the GA/FP.
- ☐ Verified the authenticity of the sources of cited/quoted information.
- ☐ Verified the accuracy of the AI-generated content.
- ☐ Assumed full responsibility for the statements and assertions made in my GA/FP.

Place, Date, Signature

Notes:

1. The above declaration, except the notes, should be included in the acknowledgement.
2. The absence of declaration indicates that no AI tool/system is used in GA/FP.
3. The GA/FP steps:
 - Generation of ideas and conception of research
 - Literature search
 - Literature analysis
 - Literature management and citation management
 - Selection of methods and models
 - Data collection and analysis
 - Generation of codes
 - Creation of visualizations
 - Interpretation and validation
 - Structuring the text
 - Formulating the text
 - Translating the text
 - Editing of the text
 - Preparing a presentation of the text
 - Others