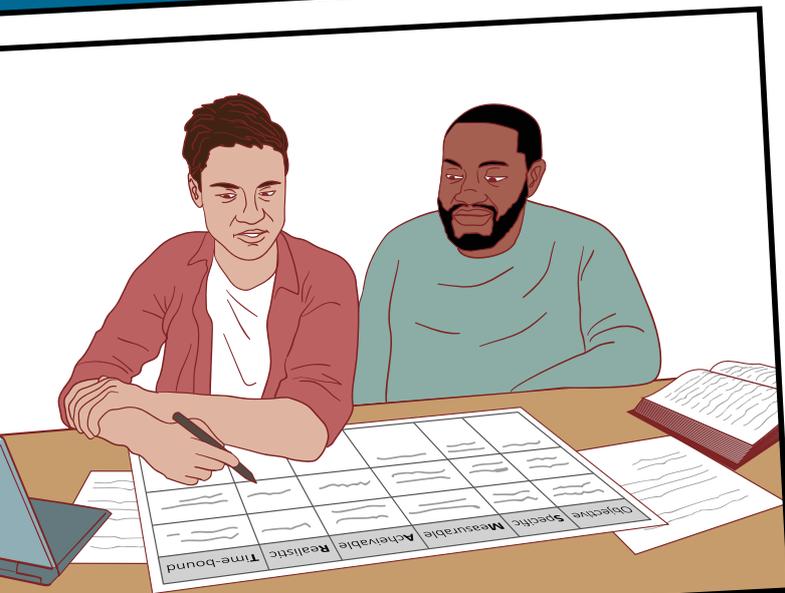




# Enhance undergraduate research and writing skills

*Research and Writing Skills for Dissertations and Projects: An Introduction* provides clear and practical guidance to ensure that all students are able to execute their dissertations and projects effectively.



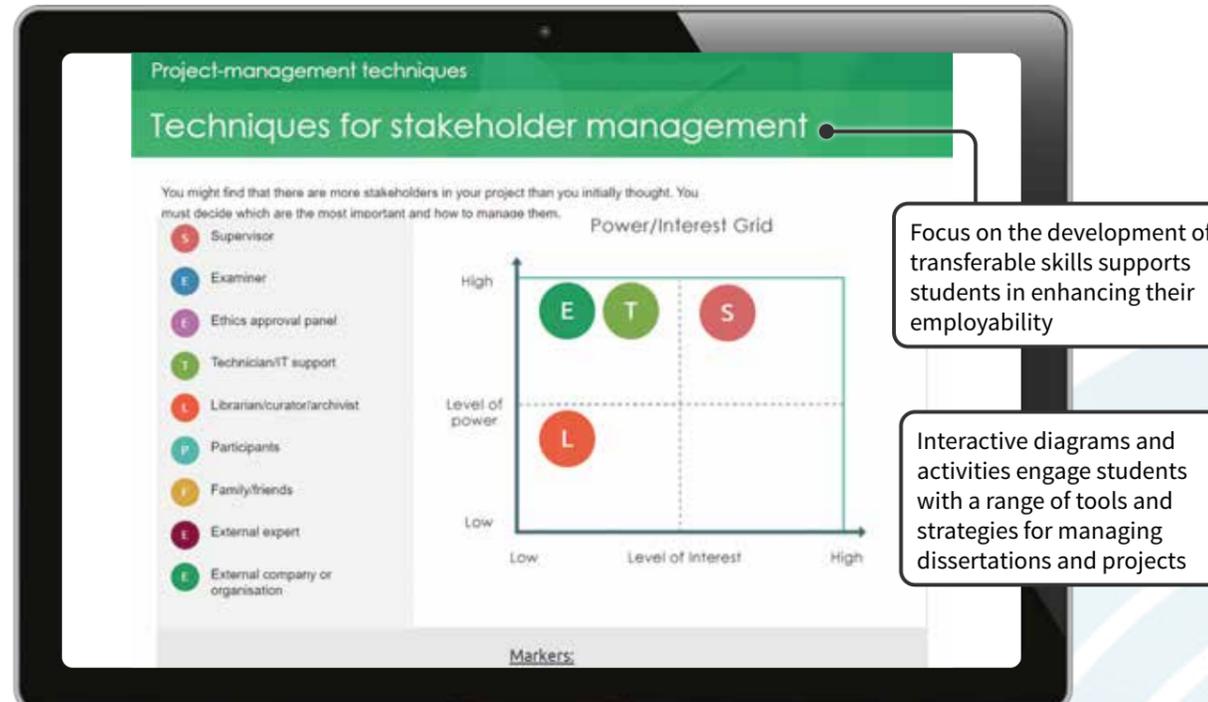
- Deliver a consistent level of core training to all undergraduate students – targeting the skills needed to plan and deliver research projects with step-by-step guidance
- Extend learning and address common challenges through multidisciplinary examples and scenarios, highlighted transferable skills, and multimedia content
- Track students' learning through multiple-choice quizzes and a downloadable 'learning portfolio', full of opportunities to reflect on, and evidence, understanding

# Demystify the research and writing process to maximise student success

Developed in collaboration with a group of advisors, authors, reviewers, and institutions, this interdisciplinary programme clarifies all aspects of the research and writing process to support the successful completion of undergraduate dissertations and projects.

 The undergraduate dissertation is usually the first time that students have to carry out an individual research project. With generally little training given in research skills, the task is daunting. Research activities are a basic ingredient of any academic activity, this programme will provide an ideal starting point for students to gain the necessary skills. 

Dr Nicholas Walliman, Lead Advisor



**Techniques for stakeholder management**

You might find that there are more stakeholders in your project than you initially thought. You must decide which are the most important and how to manage them.

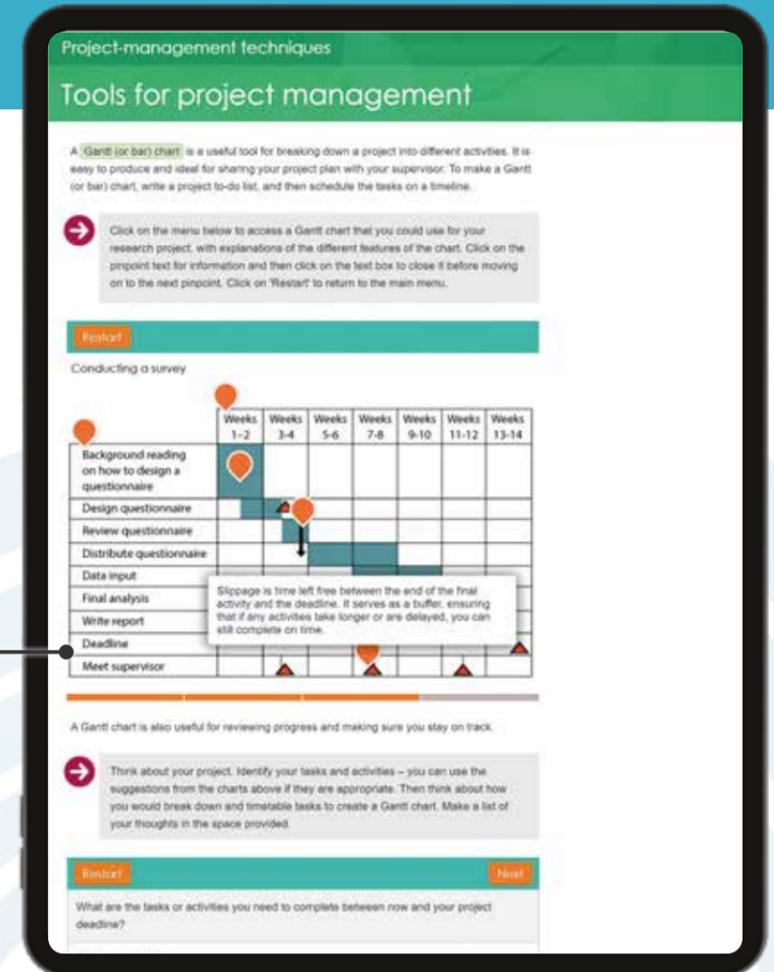
**Power/Interest Grid**

High  
Level of power  
Low  
Low Level of Interest High

Markers: S, E, T, L

Focus on the development of transferable skills supports students in enhancing their employability

Interactive diagrams and activities engage students with a range of tools and strategies for managing dissertations and projects



**Project-management techniques**

**Tools for project management**

A Gantt (or bar) chart is a useful tool for breaking down a project into different activities. It is easy to produce and ideal for sharing your project plan with your supervisor. To make a Gantt (or bar) chart, write a project-to-do list, and then schedule the tasks on a timeline.

Click on the menu below to access a Gantt chart that you could use for your research project, with explanations of the different features of the chart. Click on the pinpoint text for information and then click on the text box to close it before moving on to the next pinpoint. Click on 'Restart' to return to the main menu.

**Restart**

Conducting a survey

	Weeks 1-2	Weeks 3-4	Weeks 5-6	Weeks 7-8	Weeks 9-10	Weeks 11-12	Weeks 13-14
Background reading on how to design a questionnaire	█						
Design questionnaire		█					
Review questionnaire			█				
Distribute questionnaire				█			
Data input					█		
Final analysis						█	
Write report							█
Deadline							█
Meet supervisor							█

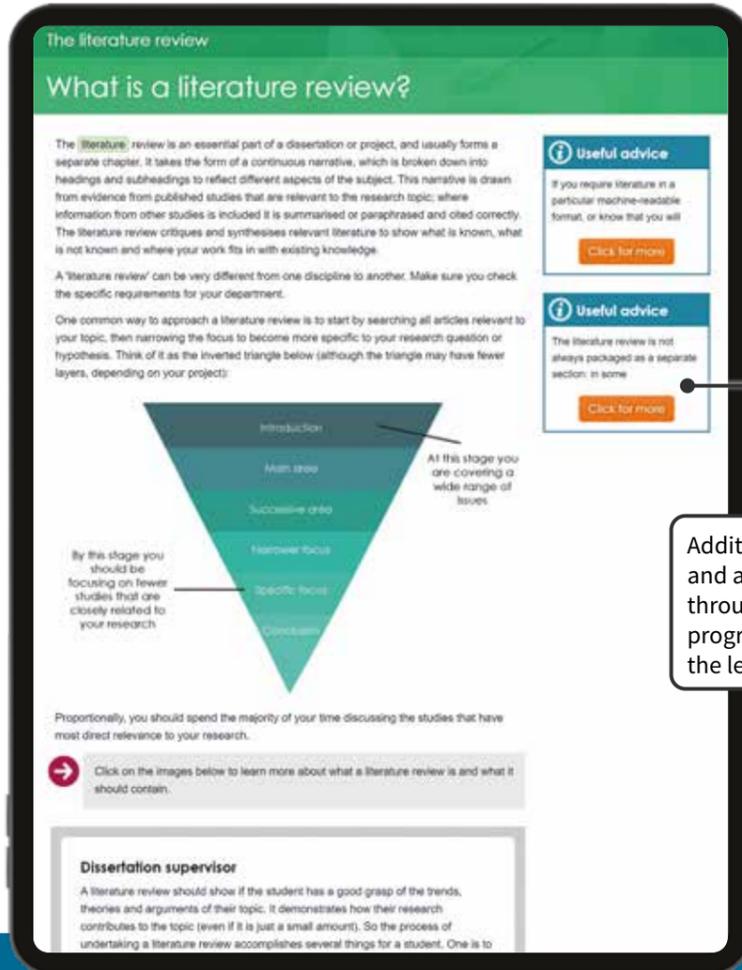
Slippage is time left free between the end of the final activity and the deadline. It serves as a buffer, ensuring that if any activities take longer or are delayed, you can still complete on time.

A Gantt chart is also useful for reviewing progress and making sure you stay on track.

Think about your project. Identify your tasks and activities – you can use the suggestions from the charts above if they are appropriate. Then think about how you would break down and timetable tasks to create a Gantt chart. Make a list of your thoughts in the space provided.

**Restart** **Next**

What are the tasks or activities you need to complete between now and your project deadline?



**The literature review**

**What is a literature review?**

The literature review is an essential part of a dissertation or project, and usually forms a separate chapter. It takes the form of a continuous narrative, which is broken down into headings and subheadings to reflect different aspects of the subject. This narrative is drawn from evidence from published studies that are relevant to the research topic; where information from other studies is included it is summarised or paraphrased and cited correctly. The literature review critiques and synthesises relevant literature to show what is known, what is not known and where your work fits in with existing knowledge.

A 'literature review' can be very different from one discipline to another. Make sure you check the specific requirements for your department.

One common way to approach a literature review is to start by searching all articles relevant to your topic, then narrowing the focus to become more specific to your research question or hypothesis. Think of it as the inverted triangle below (although the triangle may have fewer layers, depending on your project):

Introduction  
Main area  
Successive area  
Narrower focus  
Specific focus  
Conclusion

At this stage you are covering a wide range of issues.

By this stage you should be focusing on fewer studies that are closely related to your research.

Proportionally, you should spend the majority of your time discussing the studies that have most direct relevance to your research.

Click on the images below to learn more about what a literature review is and what it should contain.

**Useful advice**

If you require literature in a particular machine-readable format, or know that you will

**Click for more**

**Useful advice**

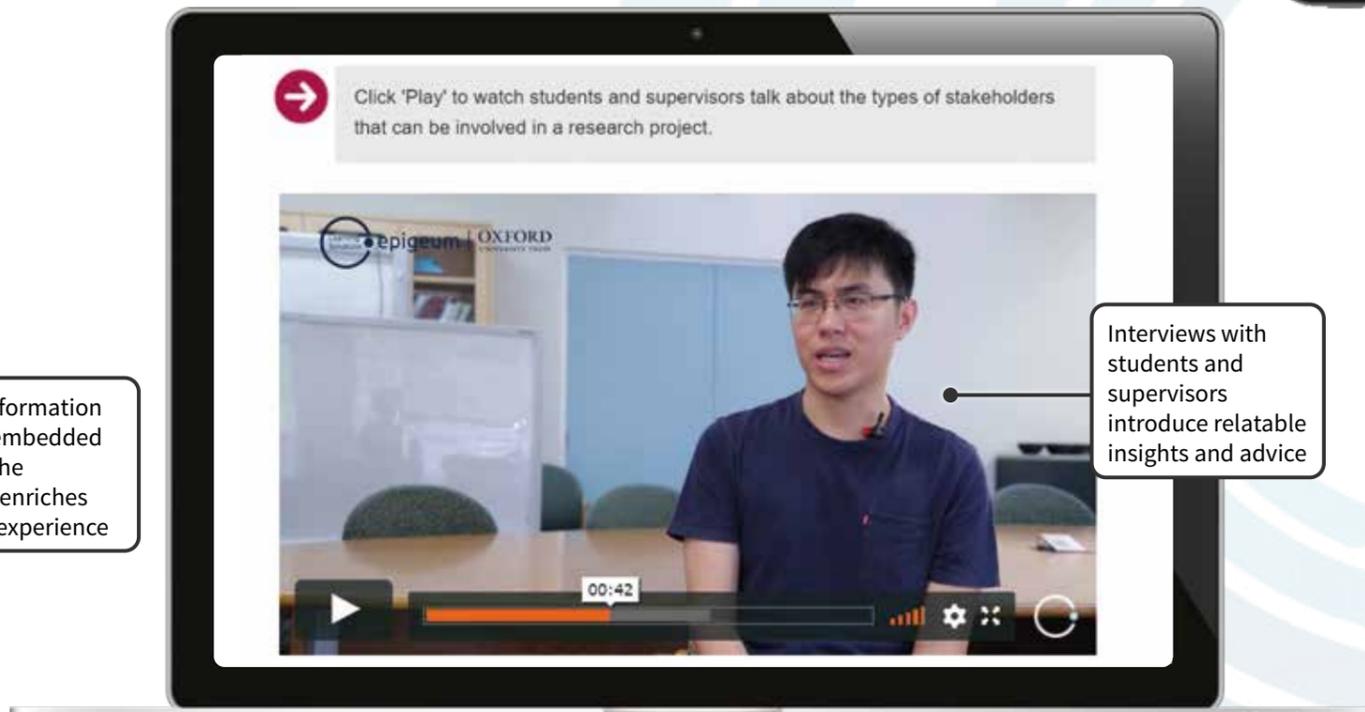
The literature review is not always packaged as a separate section; in some

**Click for more**

**Dissertation supervisor**

A literature review should show if the student has a good grasp of the trends, theories and arguments of their topic. It demonstrates how their research contributes to the topic (even if it is just a small amount). So the process of undertaking a literature review accomplishes several things for a student. One is to

Additional information and advice, embedded throughout the programme, enriches the learning experience



Click 'Play' to watch students and supervisors talk about the types of stakeholders that can be involved in a research project.

Interviews with students and supervisors introduce relatable insights and advice

 This programme will enable and equip students to ask informed questions, develop, plan, manage and carry out research, and be able to argue, make claims, and evidence their work and their contribution to knowledge, particularly in the dissertation or project. 

Professor Gina Wisker, Lead Advisor

# Your flexible online training solution

As well as offering annual and multi-year subscriptions to *Research and Writing Skills for Dissertations and Projects*, we are also able to provide subscription access to each of its component modules – allowing you to deliver cost-effective, targeted training in the areas your students need it most.

## Modules

- Preparing your research and managing your supervisor
- Project-management techniques
- Managing your time
- The literature review
- The importance of ethics
- Research methodology and methods
- Data collection methods
- Data analysis
- Structuring the arguments and chapters
- Writing up and disseminating your research

## Lead Advisors:



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