

BMAN 31500
SUPERVISION OF YOUR DISSERTATION

This document provides you with general guidance about the responsibilities of your supervisor and of yourself in the dissertation course (BMAN 31500).

Do note that if you do not find a supervisor before 11th October 2021 you may have to make alternative course choices.

The responsibilities of your supervisor are to:

- 1) Give a *generic guidance* about the nature of research and a standard expected. Your supervisor may suggest some relevant literatures and research techniques if possible or where relevant. (Essentially, however, you are responsible for identifying key literatures and deciding methods to be used.)
- 2) Be accessible at appropriate times by email or during office hours or appointments (the frequency of meetings should be agreed beforehand between you and your supervisor; Please ask your supervisor how often you can/should meet him/her).
- 3) Give feedback on your idea/written work. Please note that it is your task to improve your work by taking your supervisor's feedback into account.
- 4) Give advice on the necessary completion dates for successive stages of your work, so that you will be able to receive his/her feedback on a regular basis. To receive feedback, you are expected to make an appointment with your supervisor in a timely manner.
- 5) Make you aware if your work/progress is below standard. Please note, however, that you have sole responsibility for the standard of your dissertation. A dissertation is *your* work (your own, original, independent, individual work), **not** a collaborative joint work between you and your supervisor.

Your responsibilities are to:

- 1) Design and develop your research including research questions, analytical framework, methods, fieldwork plan, analysis etc. (Your supervisor will not spoon-feed you with a topic or data.)
- 2) Make sure that your chosen topic and research strategy is feasible. You should make sure, for example, that you have access to required data. You need to be sure that the planned workload is not too onerous, and ensure that you will be able to complete your work in time and submit a full dissertation by the deadline.
- 3) Maintain the progress of your work in accordance with the time frame agreed with your supervisor.
- 4) Maintain a suitable record of discussions with your supervisor and the progress you made. This will help you work effectively.
- 5) Take initiative in raising problems if there is any. Please bear in mind that a prompt discussion with your supervisor can prevent difficulties at a later stage.
- 6) Please inform your supervisor that you are required to submit a **Progress Report to the supervisor in December** (some supervisors may not be aware of it), and discuss

what you should write in your progress report. A progress report can be an extended summary of your research, or a literature review, or a draft of a specific section, or certain datasets, etc. Please ask your supervisor what he/she would like you to achieve before the Christmas recess.

About Progress Report:

- Since there is no pre-designed form or specific format for progress report, you need to make clear what your supervisor expects of you in your progress report. The progress report is not marked, but an essential output which enables your supervisor to check if you are on the right track and making a progress.
- **A progress report should be submitted to your supervisor directly by the 6th December.** The progress report (normally a 1000-1500 word document) describes the objective of your dissertation and the progress you made during the first semester, e.g. a literature review, methodology, and a plan for your fieldwork/data collection etc.
- Please ask your supervisor when you can receive feedback on your progress report. This is normally expected sometime in January, but different supervisors have different schedules. Also, ask your supervisor how you can get feedback, for example, via email, zoom or face to face, where possible.

Notes:

- Please note that **your supervisor is one of the examiners** of your dissertation. Your supervisor and another academic will independently assess your dissertation.
- While the supervisor will provide you with general guidance and advice, he/she will ultimately evaluate your dissertation. This means that your supervisor has to balance the two roles; guiding your work and assessing it – while avoiding conflict between them. In practice, therefore, this feature of the dissertation work will limit the amount of help and advice that you can receive from your supervisor.
- You should *not* expect your supervisor to provide you with detailed comments on more than one draft of each chapter of your dissertation. Also, supervisors are not obliged to read the full draft of your dissertation before submission.
- It is your sole responsibility of writing a dissertation of satisfactory standard. This is a key task that you cannot and must not share with any other person.
- The supervisor has no obligation to proofread your work and check the syntax. You must ensure that spelling and grammar in your dissertation are free of errors.

In short, by doing a dissertation, you are expected to demonstrate your ability to self-manage your work and develop your attitude as an independent analyst.