**Setting the scene for BA/MA writers**

**1 Identifying the procedures: how are things organized?**

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| **Questions** | **Answers** |
| *General questions* | |
| * Where can I find information on the assignment? |  |
| * Do I need to register before getting started? |  |
| * Should I fulfil the task individually or in a group? |  |
| * In case of group work, should it be a collaborative product or does each individual's input need to be assessable? |  |
| * … |  |
| *Time Planning* | |
| * How much time is set for the assignment (in hours or credits)? |  |
| * When is the final version due? |  |
| * In the case of a Bachelor’s or Master’s thesis: if I want to graduate on … (date), when is the final version due? When is the pre-final version due? Are there circumstances to keep in mind such as holidays or the absence of my supervisor? |  |
| * … |  |
| *Topic* | |
| * Am I free to choose a topic or should I select a topic from a list? |  |
| * Should I link the content to a course? |  |
| * … |  |
| *Supervision* | |
| * Are there fixed moments for supervision and completion? |  |
| * Could I discuss issues and drafts with my supervisor or professor? If so: |  |
| * where can I find a supervisor? |  |
| * how often can I meet my supervisor/teacher? |  |
| * what issues can I discuss with my supervisor: ideas, literature, research plan, outline, drafts? |  |
| * do we discuss in writing or in person? |  |
| * when can I meet my supervisor: at fixed times or should I take the initiative to make an appointment? |  |
| * does meeting my supervisor require any preparation? Do I hand in a draft or questions? What are the deadlines for this? |  |
| * will we need a report of the meeting? Who will take notes? |  |
| * … |  |
| * Is additional support available, for example, at a writing centre, a language centre, study centre, academic centre, study advisors, or counsellors? |  |
| * … |  |
| *Handing in and assessment* | |
| * How should I hand in texts: electronic version or print/hard copy? Is a cover needed? Where to mail, bring, or post? |  |
| * How are they assessed: in writing or orally, grades or otherwise (for example, good, average, fail)? |  |
| * Are there any requirements for resits? |  |
| * Will I get feedback? Will there be opportunities to discuss it with the supervisor or professor? |  |
| * … |  |

**2 Identifying the process: what am I expected to do?**

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| **Making a plan: what to do in the planning phase?** | |
| **Questions** | **Answers** |
| *Procedure* | |
| * What supervision can I expect? |  |
| * How much independence do I have? |  |
| * How much time do I have to make a plan? |  |
| * … |  |
| *Making a Plan* | |
| * Is a strong definition of the topic needed or should the topic be rather broad? |  |
| * Should I formulate a research question? |  |
| * Should this question be deduced from literature or could there be a different source? |  |
| * Should I work out the theoretical/scientific use? |  |
| * Should I work out the practical use? |  |
| * Should I formulate sub-questions? |  |
| * Does my research plan need hypotheses? |  |
| * Is it useful to make a table of contents and a time schedule? |  |
| * … |  |

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| **Carrying out the research: what is expected in the execution phase?** | |
| **Questions** | **Answers** |
| *Procedure* |  |
| * What supervision can I expect? |  |
| * How much independence do I have? |  |
| * How much time do I have for the research? |  |
| * … |  |
| *Literature research* | |
| * Purpose of the literature study: for example, to yield a research question, yield hypotheses, yield a model for analysis, or to answer a question? |  |
| * Should I or can I search for literature myself? |  |
| * How much literature should I search for? |  |
| * According to what method? |  |
| * What kind of literature? What are good sources? |  |
| * Which theories should I be sure to include? |  |
| * How do I analyse my information (data). |  |
| * Should I do more than summarize the literature? If so, what? |  |
| * Should I give a representative summary or select what I need for my argument? |  |
| * … |  |
| *Empirical research* |  |
| * Should I follow a particular research method, e.g. interviewing, document analysis, observations, survey? |  |
| * Should I find data myself or can I use a data set? |  |
| * How do I analyse my information (data)? |  |
| * … |  |

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| **Writing the text: what is expected in the writing phase?** | |
| **Questions** | **Answers** |
| *Procedure* |  |
| * What supervision can I expect? |  |
| * How much independence do I have? |  |
| * How much time do I have for the writing? |  |
| * … |  |
| *Writing the text* |  |
| * Should I make an outline? |  |
| * Submit draft chapters? |  |
| * Should I ask for feedback on my products? |  |
| * What type of feedback can I expect, e.g. detailed and/or general, oral and/or in writing? On which aspects of my process and/or product? |  |
| * Should I write self-evaluation (self-reflection) reports? |  |
| * … |  |

**3 The product: content, structure, style, and finishing the text**

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| **Requirements for the research plan and preliminary reports** | |
| **Questions** | **Answers** |
| * What is the goal of the research plan or outline? |  |
| * What elements should it contain? |  |
| * Should the plan be written in full or only as an outline? |  |
| * What will/won't the supervisor/lecturer evaluate? |  |
| * … |  |

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| **Requirements for draft and final versions** | |
| **Questions** | **Answers** |
| *General* | |
| * What type of text, e.g. essay, paper, report, summary? |  |
| * What are minimum and maximum lengths? |  |
| * Submit in what format (electronic version, print/hard copy, is a cover necessary, where to mail, bring, or post)? |  |
| * … |  |
| *Content* | |
| * How strictly is the content evaluated? |  |
| * What will/won't the supervisor/lecturer evaluate? |  |
| * What elements should it contain? |  |
| * What is the function/purpose of the elements, for example of the introduction, the theory section, the discussion? |  |
| * What information to put in – all the elements or not? |  |
| * What are argumentation requirements for this text type in my discipline? When is the support sufficient? |  |
| * … |  |
| *Structure* | |
| * How strictly is the structure evaluated? |  |
| * What will/won't the supervisor/lecturer evaluate? |  |
| * Is there a set order for the elements? |  |
| * How to express the coherence between the elements? |  |
| * … |  |
| *Language/style* | |
| * How strictly is the style evaluated? |  |
| * What will/won't the supervisor/lecturer evaluate? |  |
| * How visible or subtle should the structure be? |  |
| * How concise or wordy should my text be? |  |
| * How exact or how vague? |  |
| * How complex or simple? |  |
| * How vivid or dry? |  |
| * How formal or colloquial? |  |
| * … |  |
| *Finishing* | |
| * How strictly is the finishing evaluated? |  |
| * What will/won't the supervisor/lecturer evaluate? |  |
| * What system should I use for citing sources, e.g. APA, MLA, Vancouver, Chicago, et cetera? |  |
| * What layout should I use? |  |
| * How should I present figures, pictures, graphs, tables, and such? |  |
| * Are there conventions to follow for margins, line spacing, font, et cetera? |  |
| * … |  |