

Dissertation (ACCFIN4001P)
Guidelines and Methodical Approaches

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About me

- Previously at studied Imperial College London followed by a postdoc in finance at Cambridge Judge Business School.
- Research in asset pricing, macroeconomics and financial regulation — *What are the implications of financial regulation to social welfare and how to design optimal policies to deliver welfare gains to the society.*
- Previously taught macro-finance, financial statistics, etc.
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Reading

1. The Little Book of Research Writing — Varanya Chaubey
2. The Chicago Manual of Style
3. Oxford Handbook of Banking, Chapter 4, Risk Management in Banking

Suggested (optional) Reading

- Are Banks Still Special When There Is a Secondary Market for Loans? Journal of Finance, by Amar Gande & Anthony Saunders

Schedules

1. Meet altogether - introduction
2. Meet altogether - present preliminary outline or proposal

Meet individually afterwards

Learning Objectives

1. Consolidated foundation to conduct research
2. Academic or business practitioner, public policy
3. Work independently
4. Present evidence to address a problem

- (i) Recognise the significance
- (ii) Set a specific question
- (iii) Position within existing knowledge
- (iv) Elaborate on underlying mechanism
- (v) Conclusively aggregate

Establish a common basis to convince the audience

- Theory
- Quantitative data (primary or secondary)

Quality and quantity

1. *sufficient* sample size
2. resemble the population by *adequately* covering possibilities
3. relevant to the scope, context and time
4. directly measure the variables of interest or proxied justifiably

Aim at maintaining a steady progress.

This translates to a two-week timeline to develop *contents* that can be reported and discussed for at least 10-15 minutes:

- Raising questions that lead to addressing problems
- Reading and summarising literature
- Researching data sources, acquiring data and summarising into interpretable outcomes
- Researching inter-working amongst concepts
- Examining limitations
- Addressing problems

Meeting or reporting progress via email every two weeks is desirable but depending on your workflow the frequency changes.

Aim at working on one step at a time.

This turns out to be a misnomer or a challenge when conducting research in social sciences, accounting, finance and economics. Nonetheless, approach this in the following way,

- (i) Simplify the process at the cost of trivialising the research but at the benefit of completing the loop
- (ii) Keep record of arising issues and limitations
- (iii) Re-attempt by methodically relaxing limitations

Strategy is determined by breaking down the process into smaller frameworks where *internally-consistent* results can be obtained.

- Maintaining an output-oriented approach within the timeline is quintessential.
- Finish the process by cross-examining results across scenarios and establishing *external validity*.

Timeline

Reserve **three** attempts to structure the outline and acquire data:

Components	Attempt		
	1	2	3
Literature	5	15	25 (written summaries including citations)
Structure	Basic, Main Sections	Sections, Sub-Sections	Sections, Sub-sections (extended)
Data	Examine Source 1	Keep source 1, extend or switch to source 2	Final data source
	1 November	29 November	24 December

Researching, acquiring and summarising the data includes finding the relevant source, examining available information, codebook (variable descriptions, units), timespan and investigating whether variables are populated with entries or missing values are minimal.

Your proposed timeline can be a variation of the above or very different determined by your independent work approach.

Organise research information in one place

- (i) Literature - reference management software
- (ii) Data sources
- (iii) Summary statistics

Recent, very good - top journals 3-5

- Ambitious
- Practical
- Inquisitive and critical
- Communicative with advisor and peers