Capstone Project. Bachelor in Psychology.
Academic Year 2021/2022

ASSESSMENT 3: CAPSTONE PROJECT

Weighting: **60%**

Date and method of submission: **Week 14 – Spring Semester: Friday 27th May 2022 at 18.00 - submitted through NEO virtual learning platform**.

Word count or equivalent: **10,000 words (+/-10%), excluding references and appendices.**

Formative assessments prior the final submission described below.

ASSESSMENT 3: CAPSTONE PROJECT (60% of final mark)

The Capstone Project is an extended piece of research work on a specific topic of your choice related to your Bachelor Programme.

Your Capstone Project will be 10000 (+/- 10%) words long, not including references, and will include the following sections: *Title page; Acknowledgements; Abstract; List of contents; List of tables and figures; (1) Introduction; (2) Theoretical Framework and Literature review; (3) Methodology; (4) Results / Findings; (5) Discussion; (6) Conclusions; References; Appendices.*

For further specifications regarding the structure and the content of your Capstone Project, please see the Appendix C below.

For specifications regarding the format of your Capstone Project, please see the Appendix D below.

You will submit your Capstone Project through NEOlms by the end of Week 14 in the Spring Semester: on Friday 27th May 2022 at 18.00.

The elaboration of your Capstone Project will be supported by a series of formative assessments throughout the Spring Semester, as outlined below in a step-by-step guide.

Step-by-step guide for the elaboration of the Capstone Project (Summative Assessment 2), with formative assessments throughout

Formative Assessment 1: Draft of the *Results/Findings* section of your Capstone Project

By the end of Week 3 in the Spring Semester, you will have completed your data collection, as it was outlined in your Capstone Project Proposal (submitted by the end of the Fall Semester). By this time, you will submit a written draft of the *Results/Findings* sections of your Capstone Project. Please resort to the Appendix C for more detail on the expected content of the referred section.

Your supervisor will provide formative feedback on the referred submission in Week 5.

Formative Assessment 2: Draft of the *Discussion* section of your Capstone Project

By the end of Week 6 in the Spring Semester, you will submit a written draft of the *Discussion* section of your Capstone Project Proposal. Please resort to the Appendix C for more detail on the expected content of the referred section.

Your supervisor will provide formative feedback on the referred submission in Week 9.

Formative Assessment 3: Draft of the *Conclusions* section of your Capstone Project

By the end of Week 8 in the Spring Semester, you will submit a written draft of the *Conclusions* section of your Capstone Project Proposal. Please resort to the Appendix C for more detail on the expected content of the referred section.

Your supervisor will provide formative feedback on the referred submission in Week 11.

Formative Assessment 4: Draft of the complete Capstone Project

By the end of Week 12 in the Spring Semester, you will submit a written draft of your complete Capstone Project through NEOlms.

Your supervisor will provide formative feedback on your submission by the end of Week 12. This feedback will be helpful in preparation for the final submission of your Capstone Project, which you will submit by the end of Week 13 – Spring semester.

Summative Assessment 2 (60% of final mark): Capstone Project

By the end of Week 14 in the Spring Semester, you will submit your Capstone Project through NEOlms. This submission will be subject of summative assessment (60% of your final mark on the Capstone Project module).

Assessment criteria for Assessment 3 (LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4, LO5 and LO6 will be assessed)

The Capstone Project will be marked taking into consideration the various sections that compose it in the following way:

- ❖ Introduction (10%)
- ❖ Theoretical Framework and Literature Review (20%)
- ❖ Methodology (25%)
- ❖ Results and discussion (25%)
- ❖ Conclusion   (10%)
- ❖ Overall coherence and presentation (10%)

For further detail on the specific areas that will be taken into consideration when evaluation every of the above referred sections, please refer to the corresponding Marking Grid.

Appendix C

Specifications for the Capstone Project

The structure and the content of the Capstone Project should include:

Title Page

The following information should be presented in this order with all text centred: (a)The title and subtitle, if any; (b) Student name and student number; (c) *Marbella International University Centre*; (d) The month and year of submission.

Acknowledgements

It is not necessary to acknowledge members of staff unless you wish to do so. However, assistance from individuals and organisations outside the university should be acknowledged.

Abstract

A summary of the Capstone Project, of no more than two hundred words, is required. This should briefly state the main aims, findings, and conclusions.

List of Contents

This should list in sequence, with page numbers, all sections of the Capstone Project. If you are in any doubt as to how to do this look at the Contents page in any textbook. Word can generate a Contents page for you.

List of Tables and Figures

The lists of tables and figures (diagrams, graphs, illustrations) should follow the list of contents and each have their own numbering sequence.

1. Introduction

The Introduction should include the following issues:

- Background of the research topic. Description of a brief frame of reference for the chosen research topic, including a general description of your research topic, a discussion of the significance of such a topic in the field, and reference to key debates / perspectives that are relevant to study.
- Research question. Clear and concise formulation of the research question, whose scope has to be narrowed as to make the implementation of the planned research feasible considering the available time frame and the resources. The research question should be framed

within the previous literature and should usually arise from a gap in such literature.

- If <u>hypotheses</u> are appropriate for the type of research to be developed, they should be also stated on this section, along with a rationale.
- <u>Rationale and significance of the research.</u> Explanation of why the research question is relevant to be addressed and how it will potentially contribute to existing knowledge in the field (refining, revising, or extending it).

2. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

After you have identified your research question, you have to determine what theories and ideas exist in relation to your topic. By presenting this information, you 'frame' your research and show that you are knowledgeable about key existing concepts and theories.

The definitions and models that you select also give your research direction, as you will continue to build on these choices in different stages of your Capstone Project. The theoretical framework also provides scientific justification for your investigation: it shows that your research is not just coming "out of the blue," but that it is grounded in scientific theory.

Furthermore, it should relate the existing studies to your research, and it also allows you to show the readers what is new about your research (for instance, you may address identified gaps in knowledge in the literature or whether your research adds new knowledge to existing knowledge).

For further detail, the literature review critically reviews key issues relevant to the research topic, drawing on references to academic literature. It presents a logical, detailed and coherent picture of what literature states about the research topic. From this review, you identify a gap in knowledge and raise question(s) about your topic which requires collection of new data to provide answers to these questions and/or fill the research gap.

The literature review serves several important functions: ensures that you are not "reinventing the wheel"; gives credits to those who have laid the groundwork for your research; demonstrates your knowledge of the research problem; demonstrates your understanding of the theoretical and research issues related to your research question; shows your ability to critically evaluate relevant literature information; indicates your ability to integrate and synthesize the existing literature; convinces your reader that your proposed research will make a significant and substantial contribution to the literature.

3. Methodology

In this section, you should provide a full description of your research paradigm and design, as well as the specific research methods and

procedures that you used in order to answer your research question. You should also explain the limitations of your research and the ethical considerations to be acknowledged. For more detail, below there is a list of the sub-sections to include.

- <u>Research epistemology</u> (i.e., positivist, interpretative, critical)
- <u>Research design</u> (e.g., experiment, ethnography)
- <u>Research methods</u> (i.e., quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods)
- <u>Unit of analysis</u>
  - If people (field work research, collection of empirical data): include the age, gender, and other relevant characteristics, and explain why and how you have selected this group of people to study (sampling), referring to your research question.
  - If documents or other data sources (library-based research, revision of previous literature): describe them and explain why you have selected them and how you have selected them (sampling), referring to your research question.
- <u>Data collection instrument(s).</u> Description of the method(s) and the type of data collected (e.g., interview, observation, questionnaire…).
- <u>Data analysis techniques.</u> Description of how you figured out what the collected data mean, including any tools that were used to assist with the analysis.
- <u>Limitations of the research.</u> Explanation of the limitations of your research and its design in terms of the reliability and applicability of the results.
- <u>Ethical considerations</u>. They might include: the rights of those being researched (e.g., confidentiality, preservation of anonymity, use of informed consent), the researcher's responsibility, and how data will be collected, stored, and disposed of.

4. Results / Findings

In this section, you should provide a description of the results arising from the analysis of the data that you have collected in order to answer the research question.

Please note that you do not have to interpret your results neither draw general conclusions, because this is something that will be done in the Discussion section.

This section will vary considerably in both length and content depending on the type of research approach adopted, in such a way that it will be different in quantitative research (e.g., results can be the outcomes of the statistical analysis of data collected through questionnaires) than in qualitative research (e.g., results can be the outcomes of a thematic analysis performed to the written transcription of interviews).

Tables and diagrams might be included, but you have also to write what the results are.

Raw data, if appropriate, should be presented in Appendices.

5. Discussion

This section presents the interpretation of your results/findings and relates these to the research question (and hypothesis, whether suitable) that you set out in the introductory section and with previous research on the topic. Key questions that you can use to guide the elaboration of this section include:

- What is the relationship between the work done, the research questions, and previous work discussed in the literature review?

- What lessons can be learned from the way the study was conducted?

- What are the implications of the findings for policy and practice?

- What are the strengths and limitations of the study?

- What further research might follow from your findings?

6. Conclusions

The concluding sections summarises the main findings of your work and explains how the Capstone Project has answered the research question set out in the Introduction.

References

List all the references which appear in the text in alphabetical order by the authors' surnames using Harvard Referencing system.

Appendices

They can be a place for questionnaires and the like. Separate appendices are to be used for different sets of detailed information that would not be appropriate to include in the main text.

Appendix D

General Guidelines on the format of your Capstone Project

1. **Style**

   - Clear language should be used.
   - When an ordinary word is used in a technical or special sense, explain its meaning briefly.
   - A general rule for numbers in the body of the text is that, up to ten, they are expressed in words (e.g., one, six instead of 1, 6) and above ten in figures (e.g.,124, 1,762). However, 'one hundred', 'five thousand', 'ten million' etc are expressed in words.
   - Only recognised abbreviations should be used, and each should be given in brackets, on the first occasion, e.g., Department of the Environment (DOE). You may wish to provide a separate list of abbreviations.
   - If a quotation from any source is included, it must be an exact copy of the original text and quotation marks must indicate exactly where the quotation begins and ends. At the end of the quotation, the author, date of publication and page reference must be given to ensure that you do not commit plagiarism.

2. **Pagination**

   All pages should be numbered consecutively throughout the proposal.

3. **Section Heading**

   The use of headings in each section and sub-section is required.

4. **Tables and figures**

   They should be placed in the text and their presence indicated (e.g., "see Table 3"). They should be numbered and given an accurate and descriptive title. All components should be carefully labelled, for example, axes given titles, frequencies indicated to be frequencies and so forth.

5. **Referencing**

   Harvard Referencing system must be used consistently, both when citing the sources within the text and in the list of references at the end. For further information, please find the guideline for referencing on NEOlms under the Section Library and within the page for the Capstone Project itself.

6. **Appendices**

   They should be numbered (Appendix 1, Appendix 2, etc.) and referred to in the main text. For example, you may refer to the appropriate appendix by putting in

brackets (see Appendix 5). They should be clear, carefully structured and organized.