



Assignment Guide

Raqibat Idris, Fionna Poon

Geneva Foundation for Medical Education and Research

researchmethodology@gfmer.org

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Introduction

As part of the course, participants are required to develop and submit paperwork assignments for each module and in addition to submit an end of course MCQ and a research protocol which are required to validate the course. This document serves as a general guide for paperwork assignments.

Paperwork assignments

The purpose of the short paperwork assignments is to enable participants get acquainted with presentations and accompanying documents and show they can apply their knowledge. It is also to serve as a stepwise guide to participants towards the development of their research protocol. Participants receive assistance and precise instructions for the assignments, as well as an Assignment Guide that contains information about the required format of the assignments. Assignments should be submitted timely.

Participants will receive additional guidance for research protocol development as part of the course.

1) Assignment structure

Title page

Your answers should be written in a Word document. It should have a title page as the first page (optional). This should show the assignment title as well as your name, your email address and your institutional affiliation. You should provide this information in your assignment even if you do not have a separate title page. If it is a group assignment, it should have the names of all the participants in the group.

Contents page

A content page comes after the title page and highlights the various headings in your assignment. The table of contents can be automatically generated using the application in Microsoft Office Word. This can be found under the heading 'Table of Contents' in your References tab. For the short answer weekly assignments, you do not need a content page. You will however need a content page for your research protocol.

Responding to questions

This depends on the type of question. You can answer to the question directly or you may need to make a short introduction on the subject of your assignment, which can include some definitions (if necessary) or some global issues (data, information) on the subject under study. Then present your arguments or answers in response to the assignment questions. You do not need to repeat the questions in your responses. However, you should clearly number your answers to indicate which question you are answering to. You may use headings/ subheadings for this. Answers should be concise and within the word/ page limit if given. Depending on the question, you can then close your argument with a session on conclusion which highlights your personal opinion and suggestions about the subject that you have studied for your assignment.

It is not necessary to have separate sessions on introduction or conclusion for short answer assignments.

Literature search

You may need to conduct a literature search if the question requires you to. In this case, reliable sources should be used. Most recent and relevant documents to the topic of interest should be identified and consulted. These could be official reports, papers or articles. They could be hard copies from the library (various libraries can be used for this purpose) or information found on Internet. Internet sources include general search engines (e.g. Google search), PubMed, Cochrane Library, Embase, and WHO Databases. You should then extract the information that you need for your assignment. All the information, ideas and opinions should be written logically and in your own words. The information should adequately address the assignment question.

References

Failure to acknowledge all borrowed ideas and information in your assignment by providing references are considered as plagiarism. One of the objectives of this course is to teach participants how to write a scientific paper. Good academic practice for reference citation should be adopted. Where applicable, intext references should be provided as soon as possible after giving the information, in any standard reference style you are comfortable with. Copied sentences should be put in quotation marks, correctly spelled, and punctuated as well as accurately cited.

A reference list should be provided at the end of your assignment in the correct style and formatting (Harvard, APA, Vancouver, NLM etc.). A complete reference should have at the very minimum, the author's name, the title of the document, the publisher and the date of publication. The URL link to the document should be provided if available. All listed references should be linked to the citations in the text body of your assignment. If using the numbering method, references should be numbered consecutively in the order in which they are first mentioned in the text, otherwise, they should be arranged alphabetically. The following is an example of reference style and format for the National Library of Medicine style (NLM) style ([NLM's Citing Medicine](#): <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK7256/>)

1. World Health Organization. Care of girls and women living with female genital mutilation: a clinical handbook. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2018. Available from: <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789241513913>.
2. Chandra-Mouli V, Akwara E. Improving access to and use of contraception by adolescents: What progress has been made, what lessons have been learnt, and what are the implications for action? *Best Pract Res Clin Obstet Gynaecol*. 2020 Jul;66:107-18. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.bpobgyn.2020.04.003>.
3. Murray PR, Rosenthal KS, Kobayashi GS, Pfaller MA. *Medical microbiology*. 9th ed. Philadelphia, PA: Elsevier; 2021.

4. Advanced Life Support Group. Acute medical emergencies: the practical approach. 4th ed. New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell; 2023 Aug. 254 p.
5. Osakada F, Takahashi M. Stem cells in the developing and adult nervous system. In: Steinhoff G, editor. Regenerative medicine: From protocol to patient. Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer; 2013. p. 129-152.
6. Geneva Foundation for Medical Education and Research. Training course in research methodology and research protocol development 2024 [Internet]. Geneva: Geneva Foundation for Medical Education and Research; [cited 2024 Aug 06]. Available from: <https://www.gfmer.ch/2024-courses/research-methodology/index.htm>.

2) General information

Formatting

Title page

If you decided to include a title page, it should be written in Times New Roman font all aligned to the centre (see first page of the current document). The assignment title and your name should be separated by a space of font size 14. Line spacing should be multiple at 1.15; space before: 0 pts and space after: 10 pts. The following font sizes should be used:

assignment title	font size 20
your name	font size 14
your institutional affiliation	font size 14
e-mail	font size 14

The above information should be provided in your assignment even if you do not have a title page.

Page number

Bottom of page, centred, first (title) page not numbered.

Table of contents

The table of contents if applicable, should be aligned to the left. It should be formatted as TOC 1, Calibri font; size 11, show levels 3. See table of contents in the present document.

Headings

As necessary, please use the heading styles (heading 1, heading 2 and heading 3) used in the current document.

Normal text

Normal text should be written in Times New Roman font, size 12, aligned to the left, line spacing single.

Others

You should proof read your assignment before submission. You can use the ‘Spelling and Grammar’ application in Microsoft Word in the Review tab.

Your assignment should be saved and submitted **as a Word document file**. It should be sent as an attachment via email, appropriately labelled/named as follows:

"assignment code"-"participant's ID"-"your name"

3) Tools

Relevant online resources for citation

- [WHO Library and Information Networks for Knowledge](#)
- [Citing Medicine - NCBI Bookshelf](#)
This is a complete guide to NLM reference style.
- [Harvard Format Citation Guide](#)
This is a complete guide to Harvard in-text and reference list citations.

Citation managers

- [Mendeley Reference Manager](#)
This is a free tool to manage your references.
- [Zotero Reference & Citation Manager](#)
This is a free tool to manage your references.
- [PMID2cite, PubMed Citation Tool](#)
This is a free PubMed online tool that helps you generate citations and reference lists instantly from PubMed.
- [PMID2cite, Vancouver Reference Generator for PubMed Articles](#)
A free PubMed online tool to help you apply Vancouver style format to any PubMed-indexed journal articles and create your online bibliography.
- [Cite This For Me](#)
- [Citation Machine](#)
- [My first project – MyBib](#)
- [BibMe](#)
- [CiteMaker](#)
- [Citefast](#)
- [PubMed](#) (only for articles indexed in PubMed)
- [Google Scholar](#) (only for documents indexed in Google Scholar)

About plagiarism

Please read the online document Turnitin - The Plagiarism Spectrum

(http://turnitin.com/assets/en_us/media/plagiarism-spectrum/?Product=Turnitin&Notification_Language=English&Lead_Origin=Website&source=Website%20-%20Event).

Free online plagiarism tools

- [BibMe](#)
- [Citation Machine](#)
- PaperRater Plagiarism Checker (https://www.paperrater.com/plagiarism_checker)
- Solid SEO Tools (<https://articlerewriterweb.wordpress.com/>)
- The Google search engine (possible to check only a few sentences or paragraph at a time).

4) Contact

All paperwork assignments should be sent to **both** your personal coach for review, marking and comments **and** to the course email for administrative purpose:

researchmethodology@gfmer.org