STUDENT TOOLKIT · UNIVERSITY SKILLS 3

Dissertation Project Control Pack

Question, method, decisions, risk, claims, defence, and submission.

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Companion to *From Question to Submission*

The student's current handbook, supervisor, ethics body, data guidance, and disciplinary standards control. Use these pages to prepare decisions and preserve the evidence behind them.

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Project Spine

Question	
Value / contribution	
Evidence	
Method and inference	
Provisional claim	
Limits and exclusions	

Completion requirements	

What evidence would change the current claim?

Question–Evidence–Method Fit Matrix

Question job	Required evidence	Candidate method	Inference	Limit / decision
Describe				
Compare				
Explain				
Interpret				
Evaluate				
Design / test				

Decision Log and Risk Register

Decision log

Date	Choice / alternatives	Evidence / input	Consequence / review

Risk register

Risk	Chance	Impact	Signal / mitigation	Fallback / owner

Supervision Packet

Current spine change	
Work sent and its status	
Decision needed	
Question 1	
Question 2	
Question 3	
Relevant local rule	

Decision and reason	
Next commitment and date	

Milestone and Recovery Plans

Milestone state	Dependency	Evidence / review	Latest safe date
Proposal / approval			
Access / pilot			
Evidence complete			
Analysis answer			
Whole draft			
Submission candidate			

Recovery decision

Event, effect on the spine, options, approval needed, fallback, claim change, and new latest safe date:

Claim Audit

Claim	Evidence	Method / inference	Alternative	Limit / locations

Audit title, abstract, introduction, chapter claims, discussion, and conclusion.

Defence Question Bank and Answer Reconstruction

Practice reconstructing an answer from evidence rather than memorizing a script.

- What is the research question and why does it matter?
- What is the project's bounded contribution?
- Why does the method fit the question?
- What is the strongest evidence for the answer?
- Which result surprised you and why?
- What is the strongest rival explanation?
- Which decision had the largest consequence?
- What would you change with more time or access?
- Which limitation most affects interpretation?
- What can the project not conclude?
- How does the result relate to prior work?
- What ethical or data decision shaped the design?
- What evidence would change your conclusion?
- What is the next defensible study or design step?

Answer reconstruction

Question, direct answer, evidence, method link, limitation, and next evidence:

Final Submission Checklist

The official local checklist controls. Add every institution-specific requirement.

- ☐ Final question, title, abstract, and conclusion agree.
- ☐ Every major claim passes the evidence and method audit.
- ☐ Required title page, declarations, and word count are correct.
- ☐ Contents, headings, numbering, references, and cross-references resolve.
- ☐ Figures and tables have labels, units, sources, permissions, and accessible treatment.
- ☐ In-text citations and reference list reconcile in the required style.
- ☐ Ethics, data, conflicts, collaboration, editing, and AI disclosures are complete.
- ☐ Confidential or restricted material is handled as approved.
- ☐ Appendices and separate artifacts are included where required.
- ☐ The exact candidate opens correctly from a second location.
- ☐ File format, name, size, and portal route match current instructions.
- ☐ An authorized backup and the exact submitted copy are preserved.
- ☐ Submission confirmation is saved.
- ☐ Defence, corrections, repository, embargo, retention, and disposal duties are recorded.

Final candidate identifier, checksum, submission time, and confirmation

Keep the question and the submission in the same project.

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