Getting Started on the Research and Analysis Project

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Welcome

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Purpose of the session…(next hour)
• What is required for the Research Report
• Discuss how you might choose a topic
• What information sources are available
• How do we acknowledge these sources

Use the Q&A function

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Who are we

OXFORD BROOKES BUSINESS SCHOOL

Dr Kate Ringham
Programme Lead, Applied Accounting
Oxford Brookes University

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ACCA

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Eligibility rules

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• Have passed the three ACCA Applied Skills **examinations** Financial Reporting (was F7), Audit and Assurance (was F8) and Financial Management (was F9)

• Have passed, or gained exemption from, the other six papers at the Knowledge Level and Skills Level (**no conditional exemptions**)

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Eligibility rules

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• Have completed the ACCA Ethics and Professional Skills module (or the previous Professional Ethics module)

• Be up-to-date with the payment of your ACCA subscription fees.

Demonstrate currency of knowledge

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Eligibility rules
– currency of knowledge

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• **either** passing your RAP within 10 years of the earliest of: the date of your first ACCA examination pass, *or* the date of your first ACCA exemption being granted
or
• **passing** 3 ACCA (Applied Skills or Strategic Professional) **examinations** in the 5 year period <u>before</u> submission of your RAP
or
• are a member of ACCA in good standing (CPD requirements up to date)

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Research and analysis project what is it?

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BROOKES

```
Research and
Analysis project  →  Research Report
                     (7,500 words)

                  →  Skills and Learning
                     Statement
                     (2,000 words)
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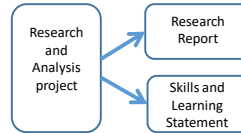
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Research and analysis project what is it?

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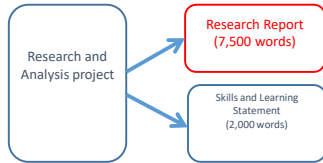
```
Research
and
Analysis
project     →  Research
               Report

            →  Skills and
               Learning
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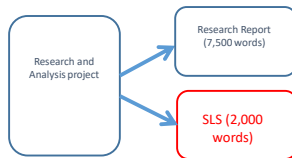
Some of the research report topics have changed.

Skills and learning statement questions have changed.

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Research and analysis project what is it?

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BROOKES

```
Research and
Analysis project  →  Research Report
                     (7,500 words)

                  →  SLS (2,000
                     words)
```

SLS – reflect on what you have learnt doing the RAP

Make notes, keep a diary or log through the process

Provides the evidence for reflection

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Summary of Research Report (RR) requirements

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Write a business related Research Report (up to 7,500 words) on a single organisation

- Demonstrate **understanding and application** of **accounting and business knowledge and techniques**
- Demonstrate ability to **analyse and evaluate financial and non-financial information**
- Demonstrate graduate **academic skills** including referencing of information sources.

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What do we mean by research?

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- Conducting an investigation or study in to a particular issue (one of the 20 topics)
- Can use primary or secondary data
- Using a range of appropriate sources (academic and other) to support your work and conclusions
- Making sure that you give appropriate credit to the sources you use (this is known as referencing)

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Research Report Topic Selection

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Research report must be based upon one of the 20 specified topics

Why 20? – cover the whole ACCA syllabus

Lots of interesting areas

Budgets, legislation, new technology, costing techniques, motivation of employees, corporate governance, risk management, mergers and acquisitions

Full list – Information pack

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Why make changes?

Informed by a review of ACCA Applied Skills syllabus & Professional Insights' work on future careers.

Emphasis on the need for analysis and evaluation in all topics
Topic 8 is the most popular topic – offer more choice in this area

Withdrawn existing topics 4, 5, 8 and 15

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How do I choose?

Your choice (not your friend's, mentor, tutor)

Working at an organisation

Studying at college or on your own

Type of research you can (or want to) do Primary research or secondary research
Access you may have to Internally Generated Information

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Research aim / question

Identify the overarching aim of your research – what do you want to achieve?

It must link with one of the 20 topics in the Information Pack.

For example,

Topic 1 – An evaluation of managers' use of ABC & Cos budgetary process in performance management and decision making.

Topic 10 – An evaluation of the use of margin based costing at XYZ & Co

The objectives are more specific goals support the aim.

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Research Objectives

Objectives explain how you will achieve the aim (how you will conduct the research)

AIM – An evaluation of managers' use of ABC & Cos budgetary process in performance management and decision making.

OBJECTIVES

• Evaluate the nature of the budgetary process (top down, incremental, zero based)
• Analyse the advantages and disadvantages of this approach at ABC &Co
• Investigate managers' views of advantages and disadvantages of budgetary process
• Make recommendations

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Research aims and objectives

Top tips for aims and objectives
• Keep focused – think about what is possible & realistic
• Be specific
• Think about what is achievable in the time frame

Not personal aims or goals. So the aims and objectives are NOT to complete the degree and graduate, to improve my IT skills, to enhance my job opportunities, to develop analysis skills etc.

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Data required

Information Pack explains what data you need access to

Primary data - particularly relevant for topics such as

• Topic 1 – budgetary control systems
• Topic 6 – motivation of employees
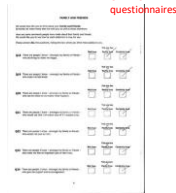• Topic 9 – planning and implementation of an IT system

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Primary research

You collect information (data) to answer your research question.
Usually questionnaires or interviews

On-line questionnaires

interview

COVID 19
All data collected
Is remotely

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Research ETHICS – Permission letter

Collect primary data or use internally generated information – you must consider ethics

Must have permission from the organisation (approval letter included in your submission)

Must have permission from participants

If organisation wishes to be anonymous – contact me on
acca@brookes.ac.uk

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Secondary research

Collect publically available information to inform your analysis and evaluation

Topic 4, 5 - Evaluation of business & financial performance of an organisation … performed exceptionally well/ poorly

Topic 12 – Effects of a proposed accounting standard

Topic 17 – weak corporate governance

Topic 20 – weak CSR

Check Google – how much information is out there???

Google

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Things to think about

What interests me? What do I want to learn about?

TOPIC ←——→ Organisation

Does it work?
Can I get enough information?

Must be able to answer the research question asked…. Think before you start

BSc (Hons) in Applied Accounting
Research and Analysis Project (RAP)

www.brookes.ac.uk/acca

Submission Periods 43 & 44 (2021-2022)

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Choosing a research project short Video -

http://www.accaglobal.com/uk/en/student/exam-entry-and-administration/oxford-brookes-bsc-hons-in-applied-accounting/oxford-brookes-bsc-assesment.html

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HOW TO CHOOSE A RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS PROJECT

accaglobal.com

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Getting started playlist

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Sources of information

http://www

Assessment criteria states – at least two different types of sources of information

Over reliance on the Annual Report will result in a fail

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Sources – how are they used?

FIND the theory / concepts / models

To demonstrate understanding of theory / concepts / accountancy / business models

To apply theory/ concepts / accountancy / business models

Study texts, reputable websites, journals (open access)

Depends on TOPIC chosen

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Choosing models / theories

Think about your topic – what area of the syllabus are you working in

Management Accounting – budgeting (topic 1), costing (topic 10), management info systems (topic 9)

Risk, governance, CSR – internal audit (topic 11), risk management (topic 16), corporate governance (topic 17), CSR (topic 10)

Business Strategy – marketing (topic 18), Investment decisions (topic 14)

Identify a model, framework or theory from your ACCA studies

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Resources – models theories

Kaplan Financial Knowledge Bank

Audit and Assurance	▶	Financial Management ▶
Business Management	▶	Law ▶
Business Strategy	▶	Management Accounting ▶
View all	>	View all >
Stakeholder analysis	>	Budgeting >
Strategic analysis	>	Costing >
Strategic choice	>	Decision making >
Strategy into action	>	Management information systems >
Risk, Ethics and Governance	▶	Performance management >
		Financial Reporting ▶

Free, open access, materials used in Kaplan study texts

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https://kfknowledgebank.kaplan.co.uk/home

TOPIC 4, 5 8 - most popular

An analysis and evaluation of the business and financial performance……………………………….

Business & financial – looking to use the business models (SWOT, PESTEL, Porter's 5 forces, Value Chain) to analyse external environment and identify reasons for financial performance.

Evaluation requires a comparison………….needs a comparison organisation. Comparator - justify why it is appropriate (same sector, same…….)

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How do models help with research?

Research question / organisation / issue

Model

Theoretical position

DATA

Evaluation
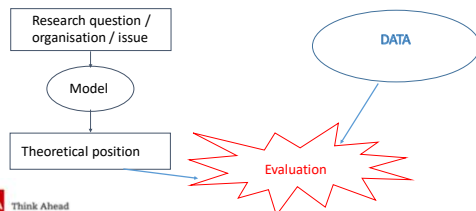
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Quality of sources for models

Appropriate needs to be appropriate so consider your topic

Good quality sources are academic source such as a text book (includes your study texts provided by your learning provider).

Open source academic articles – some academics will make academic papers available for free (known as open source). Try looking in https://scholar.google.co.uk/

Poor quality sources Wikipedia, UKEssays

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Quality of public sources

Using public information (from internet) how do we know it is good?

Is the source reputable?
government information (eg economic growth)
trusted commentator (eg Financial Times or similar)

who is it written for – investor community?

when was it written?

is there bias?

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Public sources – is it useful?

In evaluation and analysis, sources are used to support your explanation of what is happening.

For example, if you think demand for a product has fallen as the result of increased competition (new entrant, existing product at lower price).

Use a source to provide evidence of increased competition

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Using sources = referencing

Why reference?

It is accepted practice in the academic world to acknowledge the words, ideas or work of others and not simply to use them as if they were your own.   Failure to do this could be regarded as plagiarism

Plagiarism:
the act of presenting another's work or ideas as your own.

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Using sources = referencing

Why reference?

- to acknowledge the words, ideas or work of others and not simply to use them as if they were your own.
- to enable other people to identify and trace your sources quickly and easily
- to support facts and claims you have made in your text
- to show that you have read widely and use a variety of sources

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Referencing

What about commonly known facts?

- It is not necessary to reference information (dates, facts etc) which is commonly known in a particular subject area (e.g. listed shares are traded on a Stock Market). This is called common knowledge.
- Models, theories, frameworks (eg SWOT & PESTLE) are not common knowledge you MUST reference them
- Annual report (used in topic 4,5, & 8) must be referenced

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First step in referencing

As you find and use information from books, journals, web sites etc for your report, **make sure you note down details about each source**.

Record

an author (might be an organisation), title, date, edition, place of publication and publisher;

for online resources you will additionally need the url and the date on which you accessed the information

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Style of referencing

Oxford Brookes Business School uses HARVARD referencing

Other recognised methodologies (eg APA) are acceptable if applied methodically

For internet sources – the reference list has the URL and date of access (so the markers can follow the link!)

MUST be YOUR list of references – the things you have read and included in the text of your report.

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ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

| Information gathering and referencing	Clear evidence of a range of relevant information sources.	Very few and / or irrelevant information sources used.
	At least 2 types of source e.g. text books / journal articles / company sources /newspapers/business journals. Some on line sources must be used.	Obvious sources omitted – for example Annual Report for a Financial Analysis of a Company or substantially dependent on a single source.
	Clear evidence of the use of systematic referencing. Harvard referencing is the Oxford Brookes standard, other recognised methodologies are acceptable if applied methodically.	No little evidence of appropriate referencing; no systematic approach followed. No references in body of text
	The list of references includes the references cited in the body of the text and no others. All citations used in the body of the text are included in the reference list and can be traced to source.	
	For primary research, appropriate choice of sources, justifiable sample strategy with relevant permissions.	

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Importance of paraphrasing

Need to demonstrate understanding of concepts

Write in your own words (don't cut and paste)

Include references as to the source of the ideas

Plagiarism: the act of presenting another's work or ideas as your own.

Cut & Paste

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OBU Web pages
www.brookes.ac.uk/acca
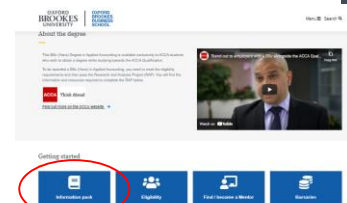
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Research and Analysis Project (RAP) resources

Webinars and materials   Project submissions   Degree documentation   Graduation

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Webinars and materials

Articles & materials from Student Accountant

Register for upcoming webinars

BSc Applied Accounting
173 subscribers

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THANK YOU

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT
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