Marketing Research: Project 3
(MRP 302)
Business Research: Project 3
(BRP 302)
Semester One 2014

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1. Word of welcome

Welcome to the exciting world of marketing/business research. Some of you may have already been exposed to marketing/business research in other studies but for most of you this might be your first exposure. Marketing Research: Theory 3 / Business Research: Theory 3 focuses on the theory of marketing/business research and Marketing Research: Project 3 / Business Research: Project 3 provides you with one of the main steps in the practical application i.e. the literature review.

Marketing/business research is a critical tool to generate information for effective marketing and business decision-making. The required information is often used to design a broad marketing/business strategy and/or a more specific product launch strategy. The collected information can also be used to assist in identifying marketing/business opportunities and threats, formulating marketing/business plans and actions, and evaluating and improving overall marketing/business performance.

This module of Marketing Research: Project 3 / Business Research: Project 3 has a specific objective and that is to introduce you to the process of starting and documenting a literature review. The assignment itself will be to produce a literature review after being taken through the process step by step. This assignment although a practical assignment requires understanding of the associated theory and you are therefore advised to consider the theory as an integrated whole.

A literature review cannot be done in isolation and the steps you will take will therefore lead you to identifying a marketing/business research topic, define the marketing/business and research problem and then broaden your understanding of the underlying complexity of the research issues through a literature review. The end product of this module is thus a full literature review of a subject you have identified.

For those of you intending to study further on completion of this module, you will be well poised to start your Advanced Marketing Research: Theory 4 (AMRT401) proposal project with a high level of understanding as to what you want to research.

There are great marketing/business research career opportunities available to qualified persons and marketing/business research provides that all round view of
marketing/business theory and practice. Marketers and business analysts work not only within their companies but are also involved with processes outside their organisations. Many marketing/business divisions will employ in-house people such as a market researcher, data support analyst, market research analyst or market research manager to fulfil specialist functions. However, lately, companies also appoint specialists such as a corporate researcher or brand researcher. The module in Marketing/business Research will thus lay the foundation for you to fulfil any of these roles.

We hope that you will enjoy this module and successfully move on to complete the research cycle through the Advanced Marketing Research: Report (AMRR402). This will set you well on the road to a marketing or business research career.

This module is a third year undergraduate module and it is expected of you to exercise a degree of independence in your studies. You are therefore urged to work through problems to find solutions. In the work place you will often be required to work independently thus the research modules will provide you with a good start in this direction.

IMM GSM also offers a student support service through the student support administrator so if you have exhausted your own solution finding ability then do contact the project coordinator for help (see contact details later).

Good luck with your studies.

2. Getting started and prior knowledge requirements

This guide provides you with a step-by-step process in achieving the required outcome. Selecting a topic on which to base the literature review is the starting point and you are guided here to read appropriate magazines such as the Strategic Marketing/business magazine and other similar magazines on marketing/business issues. The next step is writing the problem statement as this will focus the literature review. Once the problem statement is documented the next step is identifying themes that will drive the literature review. Other steps in the process are searching the available literature using a research search engine such as EBSCOHost. The end product is then the literature review.
The above is the process you will follow. However, in the process you will hopefully grow as a potential marketer as the literature is an essential source of information for anyone aspiring to have a successful career in the marketing/business world.

IMM GSM learner guides are especially designed for a student that studies at a distance. This guide in particular provides you with a comprehensive view of the process for documenting your literature review. This guide can be used with any textbook you have previously used in marketing/business research. Most of you will also be studying Marketing Research: Theory 3 / Business Research: Theory 3 and this textbook is also very appropriate for this module. No specific reference to textbook theory will therefore be made. You will however, be expected to access textbooks and published articles. If you have not already familiar with EBSCOHost then you should contact the Librarian at IMM GSM and she will take you through an introductory training course to get you up and running.

It is assumed that you will be sufficiently computer literate and that you will be able to operate the internet when attempting this module. Computer and internet literacy is required *inter alia* for literature searches.

A sound knowledge in the use of the Harvard Referencing System is compulsory before attempting this module.

Once you have reviewed the theory of any previous marketing/business research module you have successfully completed, you are ready to tackle this module.

### 3. Purpose and overall learning outcomes / objectives

IMM GSM has a series of marketing/business research modules that takes you through from the basics of marketing/business research to the ultimate test of applying the theory in an in depth research report. This module provides the underlying theory for the literature review and the outcome is a comprehensive literature review (see assignment details for word count etc).

What is research? Research is a way of thinking, a way of collecting and analysing data to allow a common and universally acceptable view of research results. Marketing/business research is using the research process to document valid information that can be used to resolve marketing/business problems.
Marketing/business research can therefore also be seen as research into marketing/business processes (See also Kolb, 2008:7; Berndt and Petzer 2011).

There are thus two essential elements in marketing/business research. Firstly it requires a clear understanding of the marketing/business problem and secondly a good grasp of the research process.

Marketing/business problems are continuous as we live in a world where we are constantly faced with challenges of change. South Africa in particular has earned the title of change capital of the world given its radical political change starting in the 90’s. Some of the challenges raised in this change process are still with us today and one needs to take cognizance of how such changes have affected our business and marketing approaches e.g. demographic profiling (Chang, 2012). Marketing/business managers need to implement marketing/business plans within this constantly changing environment. An up to date literature review will therefore reflect these changes and allow you to understand how the marketing/business processes have also changed. Marketing/business decisions based on old research (over 5 years) will often be misguided and could prove expensive mistakes. Your literature review must therefore express the requirement for up to date information (see later for more specific requirements).

The outcomes required from this module are:

- Choosing an appropriate research problem upon which to base the literature review
- Developing an understanding of the underlying complexity related to the research problem
- an understanding of the nature and scope of marketing/business research;
- an understanding of the marketing/business research process;
- a capability of analysing a marketing/business research problem;
- building an argument around the research problem
- applying the concept of critical reflective analysis
- an ability to write a professional report;
- an ability to carry out a literature review appropriate to the marketing / business / research problem;
4. National Qualification Framework specifications

This module is an undergraduate module at the third year level.

In terms of the new National Qualification Framework (NQF) it is designed as a 20-credit module offered on NQF level 7

5. Relationship with other modules

You should be acquainted with the broad context of marketing/business management in order to understand the frame of reference that is applicable to this module. It is especially important for you to be able to link marketing/business research with the Principles of Marketing and or business practices.

More specifically this module must be read closely in conjunction with Marketing 3 and Business Strategy as these modules provide much of the background theory for the literature review.

6. Prescribed textbook / Articles

6.1 Textbooks:

There is no prescribed textbook for this module. Text books prescribed in previous modules are appropriate and include;


6.2 Articles:

Trends:

Shingham, S.O. (2012). Why we'll need the wisdom of the snake.

Strategic Marketing/business 2012(5): 22-25
7. Critical cross-field outcomes

The critical cross-field outcomes, also known as transferrable skills as identified by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), are essential for your development as a student within the education and training system, regardless of the specific area of learning. It is these outcomes that are deemed critical for your development in the capacity of life-long learning.

The critical cross-field outcomes adopted by SAQA are as follows:

(1) Identify and solve problems in which responses display that responsible decisions using critical and creative thinking have been made.
(2) Work effectively with others as a member of a team, group, organisation and community.
(3) Organise and manage oneself and one’s activities responsibly and effectively.
(4) Collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information.
(5) Communicate effectively using visual, mathematical and/or language skills in the modes of oral and/or written presentation.
(6) Use science and technology effectively and critically, showing responsibility towards the environment and health of others.
(7) Demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by realising that problem-solving contexts do not exist in isolation.
(8) Reflecting on and exploring a variety of strategies to learn more effectively.
(9) Participating as responsible citizens in the life of local, national and global communities.
(10) Being culturally and aesthetically sensitive across a range of social contexts.
(11) Exploring education and career opportunities.
(12) Developing entrepreneurial opportunities.

The transferable skills identified in this module are as follows:
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Taught</th>
<th>Practised</th>
<th>Assessed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Problem solving</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working in teams</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-management</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information gathering/research skills</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication skills</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analytical skills</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning strategies</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Responsible citizenship</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural sensitivity</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Career development</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Problem-solving</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tbody>
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8. Assessment

Candidates are assessed on the basis of an assignment only (A literature review).

The assignment contributes 100% to the overall mark for the module.

The final mark, is released in the form of a final percentage (mark out of 100). The grading system is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage Scale</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>75% or more</td>
<td>Pass with Distinction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50% - 74%</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0% - 49%</td>
<td>Fail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A timetable of the assessment programme for the semester, including dates for the assignment to be submitted during the course of the year, is available in the Calendar of Events for that year. Please refer to the current issue of the IMM GSM Prospectus. This document and the Student Yearbook provide details of the IMM GSM assessment policy.
1. Introduction

A literature review is the starting point of every Marketing/business Research Report. This module, The Marketing/business Research Project (MRP 302/BRP 302) thus serves as an introduction to the literature review as a starting point in learning how to access and use literature. This module therefore serves as foundation to marketing/business research.

Reading is a powerful tool with which to gain knowledge. While we are bombarded with information in this time and age, that information is not the same as gaining knowledge (Naisbitt, no date, in Literacyla, 2012). Reading provides the opportunity to engage with the thoughts and ideas of various authors; to sift through what other people have considered, researched and recorded – and in the end to gain deeper understanding of our world.

2. Aims

The aim of the literature review is to provide the researcher with an overview of recent research that has been done on similar topics. Although you may not find research that is exactly the same as your marketing/business problem, this overview of relevant material still provides advantages for the researcher, such as:

- Understanding what has been researched thus far and gaps in the body of knowledge
- Gaining insight regarding the current schools of thought on the topic.

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1 Please note that this reference refers to a secondary source – e.g. I have not read the original quote, but found it is another source (in this case an online source). Only the source in which I actually read the quote, is given in the reference list.
2 This is another secondary source.

Please note that these footnotes are only given here to explain the references above, and should not be used in your literature review. Secondary sources should also be used only in exceptional cases.
• Identify and refine the focus of your own study
• Gaining understanding of how the research was done (to inform your own future research project)
• Gaining understanding of the key issues and variables other researchers have identified in their research.
• Getting to know EBSCOHOST (online database) and the IMM GSM library. Your most valuable contact in this regard is the IMM GSM librarian.

3. Learning objectives

• Understand where the literature review fits into the research process
• Identify a topic and develop themes to use as focus for a literature review
• Understand the concept of plagiarism
• Finding relevant literature through academic database searches and the library
• Use practical tools to assist you in keeping the focus when doing the literature review
• Plan and write a literature review in a systematic and orderly manner that meets the required standards in terms of writing style and approaches.
• Acknowledge sources through proper referencing both in the text and in the referencing list, based on the standards set out in the Harvard guidelines provided.

4. Literature review in relation to the research process

All research projects follow structured process steps, in order to ensure that the research is done in a systematic, logical fashion. A structured process is one of the primary requirements when doing research. If the researcher cannot show evidence that such process steps were followed, the research project will not be accepted as credible.

The specific process steps and the detail of what the process steps entail may differ between disciplines and between universities or colleges. Laboratory research on flu vaccines would obviously follow different protocols than research into the marketing/business strategy of children’s toys.
However, all research requires the researcher to look at literature and secondary data in preparation for the actual field research. Literature review is an essential part of any research – regardless of discipline or topic; university or college.

The diagram below illustrates the generic marketing/business research process steps.

![Research Process Steps Diagram](image)

**Figure 1. Research Process Steps for marketing/business research**

When discussing literature review, many handbooks start off by discussing secondary data, and distinguishing between internal and external secondary data. Secondary data is defined as data that has already been gathered for another purpose.

The external secondary data can include external marketing/business related information such as market surveys, popular journals, newspapers, internet, handbooks with theory and academic literature. IMM regularly publishes a Strategic Marketing/business magazine which covers more popular marketing/business research and trends. You should be receiving a copy of this magazine as a registered student. If not please contact the IMM GSM and request this. This and
other related magazine should thus provide you a first step in reading and developing a viewpoint beyond your immediate boundaries.

““Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body”

(Sir Richard Steele, no date, in Literacyla, 2012)

Internal secondary data is data derived from internal documentation e.g. company financial and annual reports and previous company related research.

The diagram below (Fig 2) indicates where the various sources of secondary external and internal data are most commonly used in the research process.
Figure 2. Using secondary data in the Research Process Steps

Figure 2 highlights the various places in the marketing/business research process where the different types of secondary data can be used. The red circle indicates the focus of this module – namely the literature review step.

5. The literature review process

A literature review requires quite a bit of preparatory work before one can actually write it. The following steps will provide a good foundation for the process:
1. The literature review topic – identifying a do-able scope and topic
2. Searching for relevant literature – using the online databases
3. Analysing the relevant literature – a lot of reading and organising to do
4. Referencing requirements and the concept of plagiarism.
5. Writing the literature review – structure and writing style
6. Evaluating the literature review – what the examiners will look at when marking the paper.
7. Looking forward and looking back – a reminder of how the literature review fits into the research process.

5.1 The literature review topic

In the normal flow of the research process you will have explored the research problem in the problem review or research conceptualisation section (see Fig 2). This would have assisted you to draw up a research problem statement indicating exactly what you will be researching. You would have identified research objectives covering the key concepts from the research statement. The research statement and the objectives serve as guidelines on what themes you should cover in the literature overview (see the steps in figure 2).

However, Introduction to Literature Review: introduces the literature review process – the third step in the marketing/business research process shown in the diagram above and therefore a modification of steps 1,2 and 3 are needed. The first order of business is to identify a topic and explore its related themes.

Finding a topic

Research is an effort to gain a deeper understanding of a practical problem. Marketing or business research would then look at practical marketing/business problems as potential topics.
For the purpose of this research you will use marketing/business magazines and journals to identify new trends in marketing/business and at the same time identify a marketing or business area that interests you.

Exercise 1: Read 5-6 copies of the IMM Strategic Marketing magazine. Read 5-6 other marketing/business journals or magazines. Make notes of the new trends in marketing/business that you encounter in those publications. Identify the new trend that you want to use as a topic for your literature review. Discuss it with your marketing/business manager to gain a second opinion.

Figure 3. Example: Considering the various new trends found in the journals

Once you have identified an area of interest in which you want to do the literature review, refine the topic by following the first four steps in the diagram below until you have a do-able scope for the study.
Figure 4. Developing and refining a topic. Adapted from Hofstee (1996)

For example your topic might be:

Social media, a strategic choice as a channel in growing market share of organic foodstuffs

Then formulate a problem statement for the study, for example:

The use of social media as a marketing/business channel is essential in growing the market share of organic foodstuffs.

You will note that a problem statement takes a specific stance. The Problem statement above takes the stance that social media is essential. In a full research report this stance will thus be the focus of the final conclusions. However, as already stated the literature review for this module is only one section of the full report. In the literature review therefore various views of the problem statement will be documented. In other words it is not the role of the literature review to make a final conclusion on the Research statement but merely to raise diverse views on the matter.
Exercise 2: Identify your topic for your literature review, refine it as explained above. Write the problem statement.

Developing themes from the Topic and Problem statement

As already stated the literature review, as per this module is a slight variation from a full research report where the Problem in context and Problem review assist in identifying themes and key issues related to the themes. However, the first source of themes is your topic and problem statement and in this example relevant themes are: Strategic positioning, Growing market share, Social media and Organic foodstuff industry.

Brainstorming is a useful tool for the process of exploring issues underlying the above themes. Ask two or three of your colleagues to assist you in discussing the problem statement and what the concepts within the statement entail. After the session, sort, consolidate and categorise their input under relevant headings see the following example:

Problem statement: The use of social media as a marketing/business channel is essential in growing the market share of organic foodstuffs

Table 1 Categorise the brainstorming results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category heading</th>
<th>Key issues</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Target market of product X</td>
<td>Age groups and their characteristics</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preferred social media</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Preferred format of messages and communications, etc.</td>
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</table>
### Category heading | Key issues
--- | ---
Social media as channel | Decision on social media to use
| Policies, legal, ethics issues
| Design and approval of material and messages
| Integration with other marketing/business media and messages, etc.
Internal collaboration | Communication between Marketing/business, Sales and production, etc.

**Exercise 3:** *Give the topic and Problem statement to 2-4 of your colleagues.*

Identify potential themes. Conduct a brain-storming session with them to explore the underlying issues within the topic. Then sort the results into meaningful categories. Choose categories that will form a logical, do-able scope for your literature review.

This exercise will provide you with themes to be explored by means of the literature review.

Carefully consider all the categories, then choose amongst those themes that emerged from the brainstorm a logical focus and scope for a time-smart, do-able literature review. The sub-issues within each category will in turn provide good ideas for search terms when looking for relevant literature.
5.2 Searching for relevant literature

This step requires development of suitable search terms to use when browsing for relevant literature on the online databases; as well as learning how to use the online database.

**Suitable search terms**

When looking for literature relevant to your study, you will have to use words that will describe what information you are looking for. The “search terms” refers to the descriptive words or terms applicable to your topic and underlying themes.

> “Knowledge is knowing... or knowing where to find out”.

(Toffler, no date, in Literacyla, 2012)

Finding suitable material takes time and patience. When using search terms to look for relevant material on the online database, it is recommended that you

- Start with the general term
- If you find a lot of material when using the general term, you can start using more specific terms
- If you do not find what you are looking for, try using other ways to describe the concept you are looking for.

Use the key words / concepts in the problem statement and the themes. Begin with the key terms or concepts – then expand the search.

In the example above the themes are:

- Strategic positioning,
- Growing market share,
- Social media
- Organic foodstuff industry.

These themes can be used in your first probe into the literature.
If the search produces many articles, you can refine the search to reflect your specific topic more closely, for example,

- Strategic positioning and growing market share

Play around with the words to see what articles come up that deal with the issues relevant to your research topic – even if the articles may deal with research in other industries.

**Exercise 4:** Draw up a table of search terms for the themes or categories for your topic.

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**Using an online database: EBSCOHost**

The following information is an extract from the IMM tutorial letter guidelines (2011):

**EBSCOHost**

As a registered student you have access to EBSCOHost, a quality database that provides academic content for your studies, which you can download to your PC or laptop to use at your convenience. It provides up to date material in an easy accessible manner, saving time and money.

**How to access EBSCOHost information as a registered IMM GSM student:**

Go to the Student Portal on the IMM GSM website and enter your student number and pin number. Scroll down until you see the EBSCOHost logo and click on the icon. You will automatically be directed to the EBSCOHost site.

**How to access the information using EBSCOHost:**

1. Click on Business Source Premier.
2. Enter a keyword/s to retrieve information required, for example Relationship Marketing/Business.
3. Click on search.

4. All the available articles will be displayed.

5. Limit the search to the most recent scholarly articles. Using the following steps:
   
   ➢ Make ticks in all the tick-boxes on the right-hand side of your screen namely:
     
     o ‘Full text’
     o ‘References Available’
     o ‘Scholarly (Peer reviewed) Journals’
   
   ➢ You may wish to change the timeline to a maximum of 5 or 10 years e.g ‘2008 to 2013 or 2004-2014.
   
   ➢ Update results
   
   ➢ Articles will then appear with the most recent article shown first

6. Read the citation (short description) for the article, which appears below the title – if you do not want the article, move to the next article on the list.

7. If the citation looks promising, scroll down and click on the PDF full text and read the article.

8. Email the article to yourself for future use and referencing – move to the top of the screen and click on email.

If you require more assistance on accessing the database, please contact the IMM GSM librarian.

5.3 Analysing the relevant literature

The term “literature review” requires you to carefully read through the relevant academic articles and determine sections relevant to the themes and concepts you identified in step 1. One article may address more than one concept or theme.

The next step would be to compare the views of various authors reading the same theme or concept. This will provide you with a balanced overview of the current trends and thoughts on the various concepts and themes.
One of the tools that will assist you in organising and managing the articles you are reading, is a matrix similar to the one portrayed below.

![Literature Review Matrix](image)

**Figure 5. Literature Review Matrix suggested new diagram**

Such a matrix will help you monitor and control that
- You have read enough articles per theme or concept.
- Can easily compare the views between various authors on the same issue
- That will assist you when writing the actual literature review

The literature review requires that you have at least 6-10 articles per theme. Please also note that the articles must provide diverse views of different authors. Six or ten articles by one author on a particular theme are therefore not acceptable. You need to compare the views of different authors with each other on the same theme – do they agree or disagree with each other? Do any of those authors add new concepts or issues to the existing views?

“To read without reflecting is like eating without digesting.”

(Burke, no date, in Literacyla, 2012)
The literature review further requires that 60% or more of the material are sourced from peer reviewed articles (academic articles) post 2004 – so the articles must be less than 10 years old. The more recent the articles the better as marketing/business practices tend to change fairly quickly. The reference list at the end of the document should have at least 24-40 sources (at least 4 themes and 6-10 articles per theme thus 24-40 articles).

Reading the articles

You will find that there are a vast number of articles to read, and many of them may discuss a combination of the concepts you want to study. With that in mind you may find it easier to use different colours highlighters when reading the articles – colour-coding the concepts that will be discussed in the literature review. When you go back to look at the material you found on a specific concept you may look only for that particular colour used for that concept. Use a matrix to compare views of various authors on similar concepts.

“*The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn the more places you’ll go*”.

(Dr. Seuss, no date, in Literacyla, 2012)

The articles themselves will provide you with further ideas or related themes. For example strategic positioning may lead to the identification that leadership is also a relevant theme. However, for the purposes of this study 4-5 themes are sufficient.

5.4 Referencing requirements and the concept of plagiarism

Proper referencing is one of the key requirements of research to be seen as credible. If the referencing is incomplete or not done correctly, the spectre of unprofessional work and even plagiarism rears its ugly head. IMM follows the Harvard method of referencing and the guidelines provide examples of how the in-text referencing as well as the reference list at the back should be done.
What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism can be described as the act of borrowing passages from books and articles or websites without identifying those sources (the books, articles or websites) (Procter, 2006; p.1).

The purpose of the literature review is to illustrate that you have read what other academics and researchers wrote about the themes and concepts you have identified for your topic. The idea is not to copy what those authors wrote – but to read it, try and understand what the authors are saying, and compare it with what other authors said about the same issues. Therefore, you should write the review in your own words, while acknowledging where you found the material. Give the authors’ surnames, dates and pages in the text where you discuss the material. You have to identify the source then and there whether you quote a passage directly in quotation marks, paraphrase it closely in your own words, or just summarise the material. That applies to Internet sources too: you still need to give author or site, and the date (Procter, 2006). All the references in the text must be listed in full at the end of the document in a Reference List.

Most students do not intend to commit plagiarism, but may do so unintentionally due to ignorance or because they are in a hurry or have careless study habits.

The reasons why references are given include the following:

- It acknowledge the writer’s debt to the work of other authors;
- Proper referencing adds weight to your argument by citing authoritative sources;
- The references provide sources of additional information;
- The reference information offers the reader the opportunity to locate and read your sources (UNISA Library Services 2010).

Please note that a Reference List is required for this module – e.g. it must list all the sources used and cited in the text.

It is a good idea to start listing the references as you start using material from the articles, and to keep building the reference list as you progress, rather than leave it till the paper is done, to try and list all the sources.
A Bibliography is a list of all the sources read, but not necessarily used or cited in the text – a bibliography is not used in this module.

5.5 Writing the literature review

This section deals with the structure, flow and acceptable writing style to be followed when writing the literature review.

The literature must show a logical and well-structured flow; each theme or concept should have a relevant sub-heading; within the section the flow should be from general to more specific. Explore and discuss one issue per paragraph and link paragraphs in a logical manner.

Plan the structure of the literature review

Use the concepts and the themes from your topic as a guideline to plan and draw up a framework for the literature review. Plan upfront what concepts you will discuss first, second and so on. Based on the literature you have read you should also be able to decide what subsections will resort under each of those concepts or themes. Such a framework will ensure that you fit in all the information you have read, in a logical and well-structured manner. Your themes will provide the headings for the literature review.

See the example of a literature review structure and framework below:

Topic: The use of social media to engage consumers on “green” products.

The underlined sections in the topic indicate potential themes for researching within the topic that can be explored by using those concepts as search terms, and also to structure the flow of the literature review. A logical flow and structure for the discussion could potentially be as follows:

1. Introduction (to the topic)
2. Target market for green products
   • Categories of green products
   • Demographics of the users of those products
3. Social media as a marketing/business tool
   - Social media users profiles
   - Social media as marketing/business tool
   - Social media used in marketing/business green products

4. Social media as tool to engage consumers’
   - Message and information formats
   - Forums and feedback management
   - Etc.

**Exercise 5:** Draw up a discussion framework for your literature review.

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

*Writing style for literature review*

In all cases use a **critical analytical and reflective** approach in discussing and comparing the views of the various authors. See some examples of critical reflective discussions below.

**Reflective writing**

What does that mean…? Perhaps it might be helpful to first look at what is reflection: Collins Concise Dictionary (2001, p.1259) defines *reflect* as: “…think, to meditate, to ponder”; while *reflection* is described as “…careful or long consideration or thought.” Using this as our working definition one can argue that reflection is not simply giving facts nor is it simply asking questions.

*Reflection* is adding value to an issue by posing and developing an argument, or a number of arguments, around that issue. Reflection is therefore being able to see
more than one viewpoint – which is exactly what is required when doing the literature review. Once you are able to consider more than one viewpoint you are on your way to understanding the broader issues around any problem (unraveling the complexity of a problem).

*Categorical statements* on the other hand represent only one side of the picture and usually exclude the possibility of others. Statements such as ‘the solution to the problem is …’ are categorical and should NEVER be used at any stage in a research report.

The follow example illustrates some of the principles of critical reflective discussion which includes:

- Comparing views of various authors
- Recognising patterns and differences in these views
- Taking it further – finding additional information when required
- Coming to an *informed* conclusion
- Reflecting on what that means in terms of the study
Example of critical reflective writing and literature review

Extract from a literature review section:

Ganguli and Roy (2010) regards the gap between local competitors as negligible since banks offer similar products and services, hence the need for differentiation on specific criteria becomes crucial ingredients for influencing customer satisfaction and loyalty. Insight into of the key criteria can usually only be achieved by a clear understanding of the priorities of consumers. Understanding the key drivers that are impacting on adoption has become a topical issue in the banking sector (Aldas-Manzano, Lassala-Navarre, Ruiz-Mafe & Sanz-Blas, 2009: 54). According to Rotchanakitumnuai and Speech (2003), historical studies have focused on positive aspects of digital banking, but limited research has been undertaken to investigate the barriers of adoption.

Despite heavy investment by banks to improve their digital presence, many consumers are inactive or engage with this channel on a limited basis (Sarel & Marmorstein, 2003). It would seem long term profitability and shareholder value through this medium can only be achieved through customer satisfaction which is the glue that galvanizes this recipe (Anderson, Fornell & Mazvancheryl, 2004).

Note the comparison and integration between the views of various authors on the same discussion point, namely adoption of new products and technologies, by considering customer needs and satisfaction.

Literature review is not about giving long extracts from a single source – rather it is about this type of comparison shown above.

Note the referencing in the text – cases where it is used as part of the sentence; and cases where the source is given at the end of the sentence.

Format and Technical requirements

Formatting
The requirements for the Literature formatting are as follows:
Font: Arial 12
Spacing: 1.5
Alignment: Justified
Layout:
Insert the Assignment cover page available from the IMM GSM, followed by a Title page.

Provide a proper title page for the document- the title page as below should be a full page. Do not use excessively large font sizes.
TITLE
Presented to
The IMM Graduate School of Marketing/business
In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
BPhil Marketing/business
By
Jonathan Buthelezi
[Student Number]
November 2013

After the Title page:

➢ Declaration of own work/plagiarism
➢ Acknowledgements
➢ Executive summary
➢ Table of content
➢ List of abbreviations (if relevant)
➢ The literature review
   o Introduction
   o Body with suitable headings and sub-headings
   o Summary
➢ Reference List
➢ Addendums

Ensure that all headings and subheadings are formatted consistently throughout the document.

Final checking
Pay attention to the following to ensure a polished document:

➢ Readability
➢ Always ask someone else to read the thesis to check for readability, grammar, etc.
➢ Page numbering
Margins - Check that all margins are in accordance with the regulations. Also ensure that the right margin is justified throughout as it looks much neater.

Headings and subheadings. Check that all chapter headings and subheadings in the main text match those in the table of content.

Check that all the sources given in the text are listed in the reference list; and vice versa.

5.6 Evaluating the literature review

What the examiners will look at when marking the paper.

ACADEMIC

- Relevance of literature topic and themes
- Recent relevant sources used
- Knowledge of the subject
- Relevant theoretical issues (marketing/business and business)
- Reference technique
- Coverage of the subject

TECHNICAL ISSUES

- Language
- Style
- Structure of the dissertation (e.g. title page, contents page, etc.)
- Typing/spelling errors
- Reference list

5.7 Looking forward and looking back

A reminder of how the literature review fits into the research process – feeding back to the problem statement and feeding forward to the research design.

6. The project, mark allocation and submission

Plan and write a literature review on the marketing/business topic you identified.

The process is as follows (see process discussed in this guide):

- Identify a new trend and develop into a topic
- Identify and document themes (4-6)
- Develop search terms (code words for search of the literature)
- Find relevant material (Do the literature search)
- Study, analyse and compare the views of various authors on the same issues
- Write the literature review
- Complete the referencing according to the IMM Harvard guidelines
- Attach the topic, the themes and the search terms as addendums after the reference list in the document.

**Required length of the literature review**: 2500-3000 words – that does not include the title page, table of content, the reference list and the addendums.

**Marks allocated:**

| Topic, themes and search terms | 20 |
| Literature review              | 60 |
| Referencing in text and reference list | 10 |
| Structure, language and spelling. overall quality | 10 |

**Total** | **100%**

**Submission of the project**

Please refer to the cover sheet for the due date for Marketing Research: Project 3 / Business Research: Project 3. The project cover sheet is available on the IMM GSM website.

Student **academic enquiries** must be directed to Rabia Carvalho, the Project Coordinator:

Rabia Carvalho

rabia@immgsm.ac.za
7. References


Unisa Library Services, 2010. Guidelines for Referencing Source Material for Assignments, Articles, Research reports, Theses & Dissertations, and TMA’s. eLibrary@SBLUnisa. Pretoria