

A stylized sun graphic consisting of a solid yellow circle with several short, curved yellow lines radiating from its top-left edge, set against an orange background.

Getting started with your dissertation

Global Health Dissertation Workshop 1

iBSc/iMSc/MSc/MRes



Today's workshop

1. Newham Public Health and other partnership projects
2. What is a dissertation?
3. **Activity 1:** Dissertation structure and marking criteria
4. Dissertation structure
5. Break
6. The dissertation process
7. Narrowing down a topic
8. **Activity 2:** Brainstorm topics
9. **Activity 3:** Plan your preparation

Dissertations with Newham Public Health





Dissertation on social prescribing in Northeast London

- See [here for the NHS definition of social prescribing](#)
- Data on benefits of social prescribing Northeast London
- 100,000 cases of social prescribing, with 2,000 recorded outcomes
- Observational study, descriptive statistics

Working with Dr Victoria Tzortziou Brown



Process of applying to these projects



- Send an up-to-date **CV** and a **300-word maximum cover letter** (explaining why you are interested and why you are suited to the project) to me: a.papamichail@qmul.ac.uk
- Deadline for applying: **Friday 25th October**
- Details to be shared via email after the workshop

Learning objectives

By the end of the workshop, you will be able to:

1. Describe the dissertation process and the learning activities it involves.
2. Recall how to find information and support about the dissertation.
3. Explain how you will start to develop a dissertation topic.
4. Create a plan for your term 1 dissertation activities

A stylized sun graphic consisting of a solid yellow circle with five dashed yellow lines of varying lengths radiating from its top-left edge. The sun is positioned on the left side of the slide, partially overlapping a large white curved shape that dominates the right half of the background. The background is a solid orange color.

What is a dissertation?

Shout out!





**Who has/has
not done a
dissertation
before?**

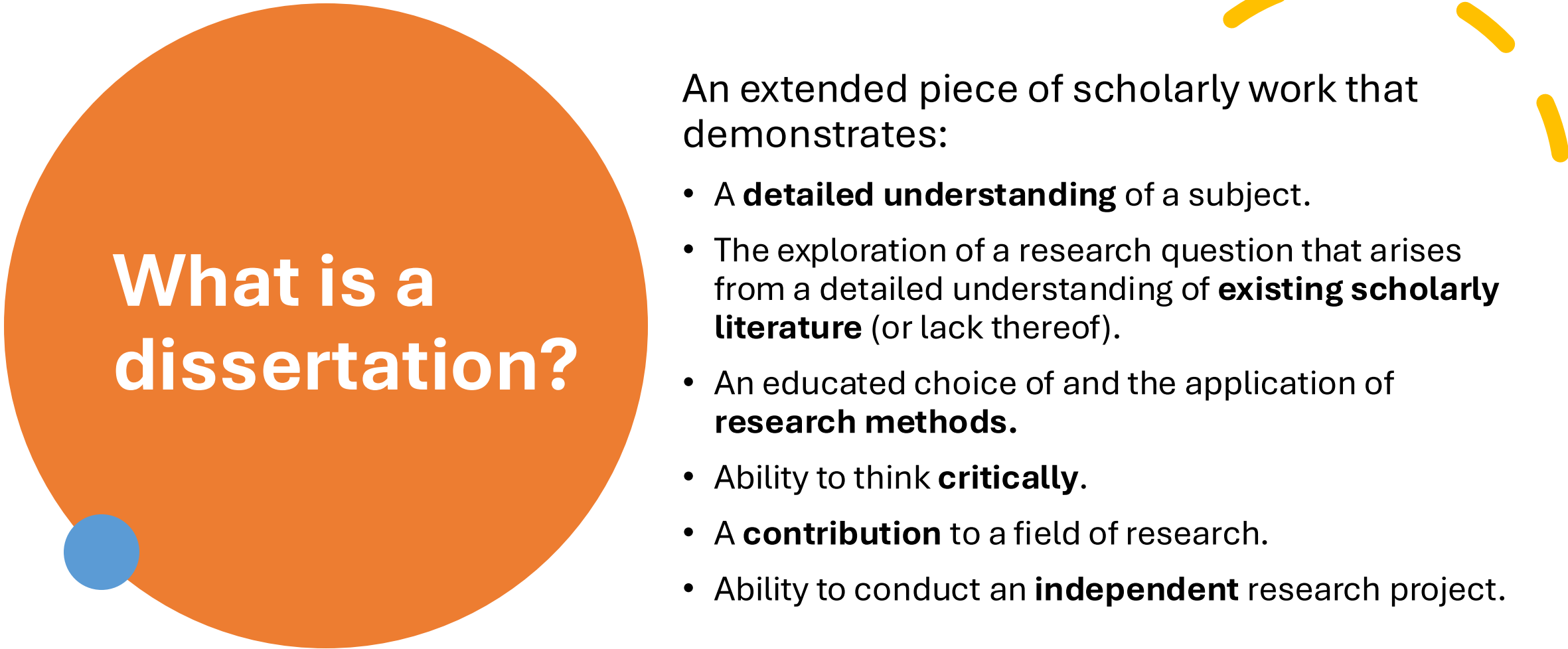
If you have...

- What was it about?
 - Did you enjoy/dislike the experience?
 - Why did you enjoy/dislike the experience?
 - Is there anything you would do differently this time around?
- 



What is a dissertation?

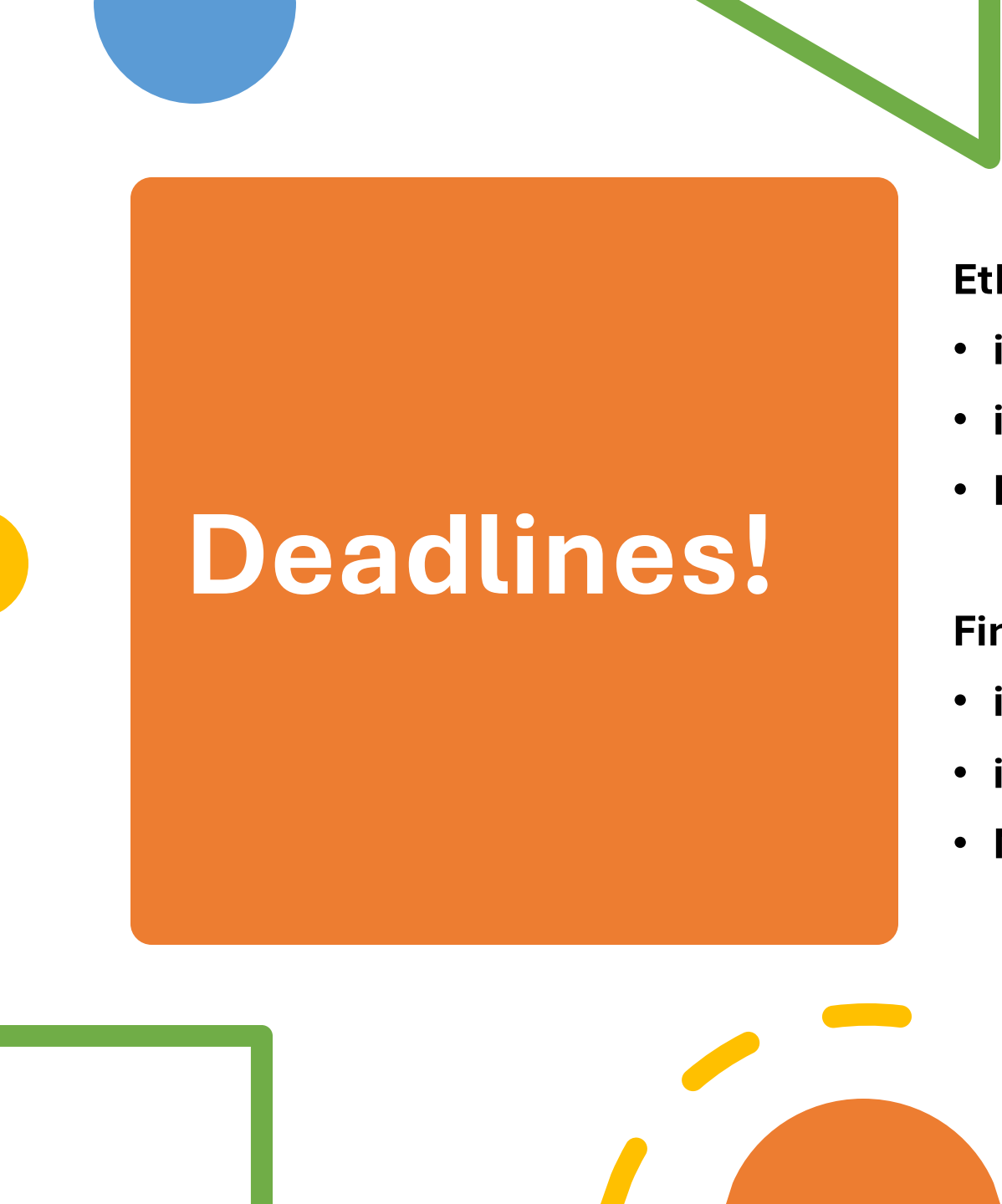
- How does it differ to the assessments for you other modules?
 - What kinds of skills/knowledge do you need to produce a successful dissertation?
- 



What is a dissertation?

An extended piece of scholarly work that demonstrates:

- A **detailed understanding** of a subject.
- The exploration of a research question that arises from a detailed understanding of **existing scholarly literature** (or lack thereof).
- An educated choice of and the application of **research methods**.
- Ability to think **critically**.
- A **contribution** to a field of research.
- Ability to conduct an **independent** research project.



Deadlines!

Ethics applications:

- **iBSc:** 19 February 2025
- **iMSc/MSc/MRes:** 19 March 2025
- **Latest primary data collection start:** 11 June 2025

Final dissertation:

- **iBSc:** 19 May 2025
 - **iMSc/MSc/MRes:** 7 August 2025
 - **MSc Public Mental Health:**
- 



International Journal of Sexual Health

ISSN: (Print) (Online) Journal homepage: www.tandfonline.com/journals/wijs20

Implementation of Sexual and Reproductive Health Education Policy in Schools in Asia and Africa: A Scoping Review

Rhea Khosla & Victoria Tzortziou Brown

Health Policy and Planning, **38**, 2023, 1050–1063
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1093/heapol/czad075>
Advance access publication date: 21 August 2023
Review

OXFORD

Do private health providers help achieve Universal Health Coverage? A scoping review of the evidence from low-income countries

Laura Coveney¹, David Musoke² and Giuliano Russo^{1,*}

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Accepted on 15 August 2023



GLOBAL HEALTH: SCIENCE AND PRACTICE

Dedicated to what works in global health programs

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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Budget Process and Execution: A Case Study on the Underperformance of the Peruvian Health System, 2000–2021

Rolf Erik Hönger,^a Doreen Montag^a



Dissertation structure

Activity 1: Dissertation structure and marking criteria

Dissertation structure and marking criteria

Go on to QM Plus and find the 'dissertation assessment guide and criteria'

Take 5 mins to read through the dissertation assessment guide and criteria on your own.

Then get into pairs (with a fellow PG or UG colleague) and take 15 mins to work through the following questions

1. **Abstract:** At what stage in the dissertation are you able to write your abstract?
2. **Background to Issue, Rationale and Objectives:** Where does a research aim come from?
3. **Methodology and methods:** What is the difference between your methodology and method?
4. **Findings and results:** What things should help to structure your presentation of findings?
5. **Analysis, Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations:** How does your analysis, discussion, conclusion and recommendations chapter differ from your findings and results?



Abstract

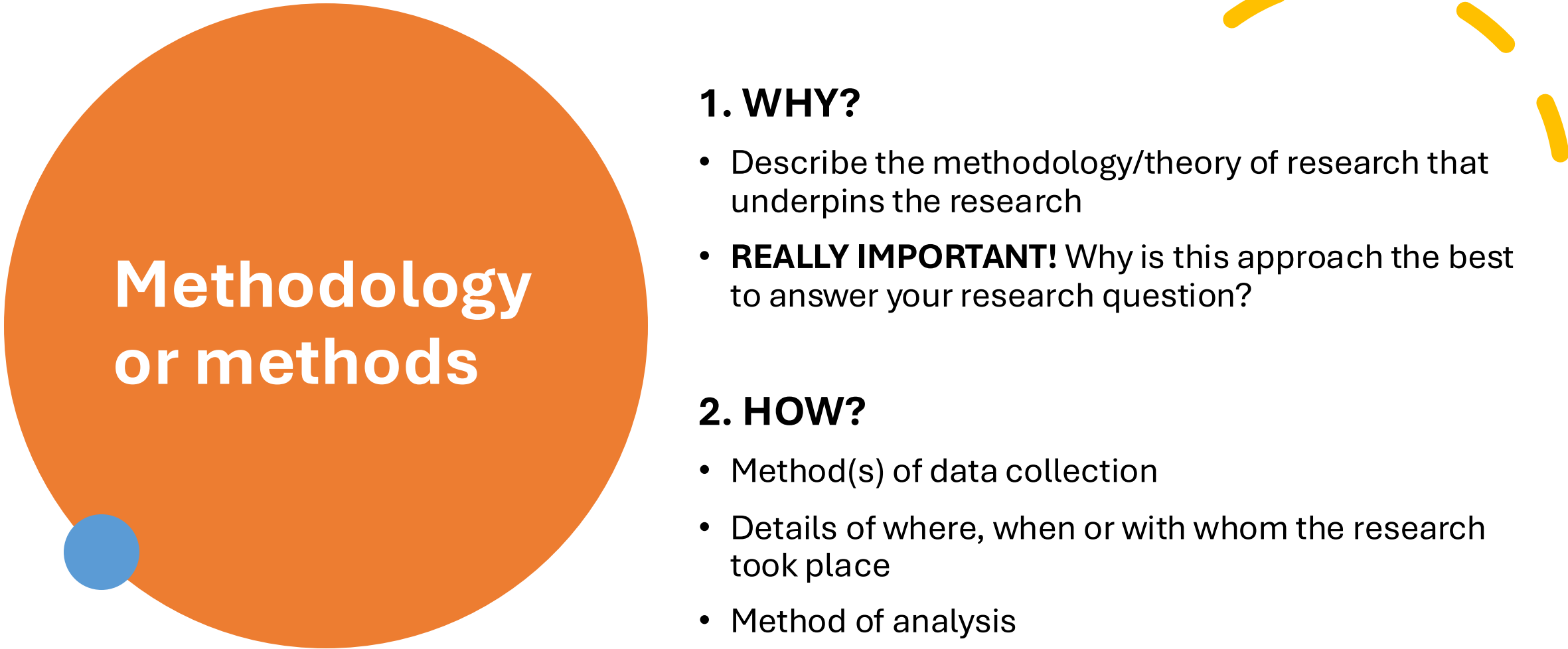
The abstract is a concise summary of your dissertation, usually about 300-500 words long. You should write it at the very end, when you have completed the rest of the dissertation.

In the abstract, make sure to:

- State the main topic, aims and objectives of your research
 - Describe the methods you used
 - Summarise the main results
 - State your conclusions
- 

Background to Issue, Rationale and Objectives

- Establish your research topic and present the issue to be researched
- What is the background and context of the research?
- Why is this topic or issue important and for whom?
- Discuss the state of existing research on the topic and the relevance of your work to a broader problem and/or debates (**embedded literature review**):
 - How does your research fit into the bigger picture?
 - What are the key debates?
 - What theories and concepts are used to explain and unpack the topic?
- Based on the above craft a research aim, research question and research objectives.
- Briefly indicate how you will answer your question (methodology, methods and theoretical frameworks)



Methodology or methods

1. WHY?

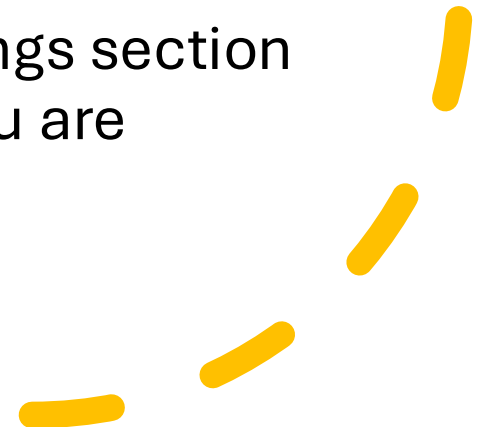
- Describe the methodology/theory of research that underpins the research
- **REALLY IMPORTANT!** Why is this approach the best to answer your research question?

2. HOW?

- Method(s) of data collection
- Details of where, when or with whom the research took place
- Method of analysis

Findings and results

- Once you have collected your data you need to present it and show:
 - The characteristics of your findings
 - Key themes
- Must be organised in a logical manner
 - Headings and sub-headings
- Descriptive, rather than analytical
- Provides 'stuff' that you can then work on further in the next chapter...
- The structure and feel of your findings section will depend on the type of study you are undertaking





Analysis & Discussion

- Remind the reader of the aims, research question and objectives.
 - Answer your research question.
 - Discuss if the research findings fit with/can be explained by the theoretical frameworks you introduced in the background section.
 - Discuss if there are further theories and frameworks that help to explain the results.
 - If any of the results were unexpected, offer explanations for why this might be.
 - Are there alternative interpretations of your data?
 - Discuss any limitations that might have influenced the results.
- 

Conclusion and Recommendations or “SO WHAT?”

- What are the implications of your findings for relevant audiences (policy makers, other scholars, the public etc.)
- How have your findings contributed to knowledge in the field of global health?
- Have you identified any limitations of the research, or avenues for further research?



**Any
questions?**



A vibrant tropical beach scene. In the foreground, a white sandy beach curves along the bottom left. A large palm tree with green fronds leans over the beach from the top left. The ocean is a brilliant turquoise color, with a small boat visible on the horizon. The sky is a deep blue, filled with scattered white clouds. The word "Break!" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font in the center of the image.

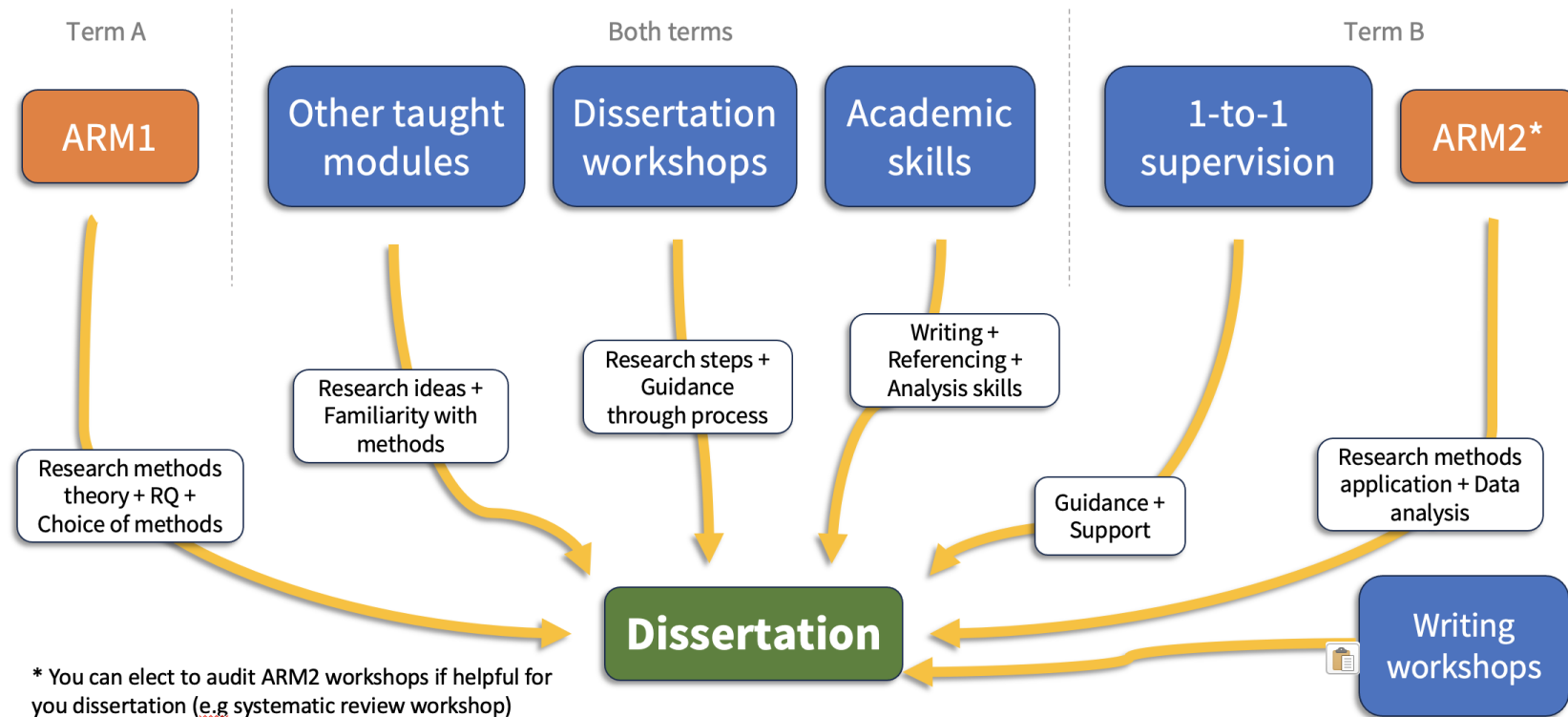
Break!



The dissertation process

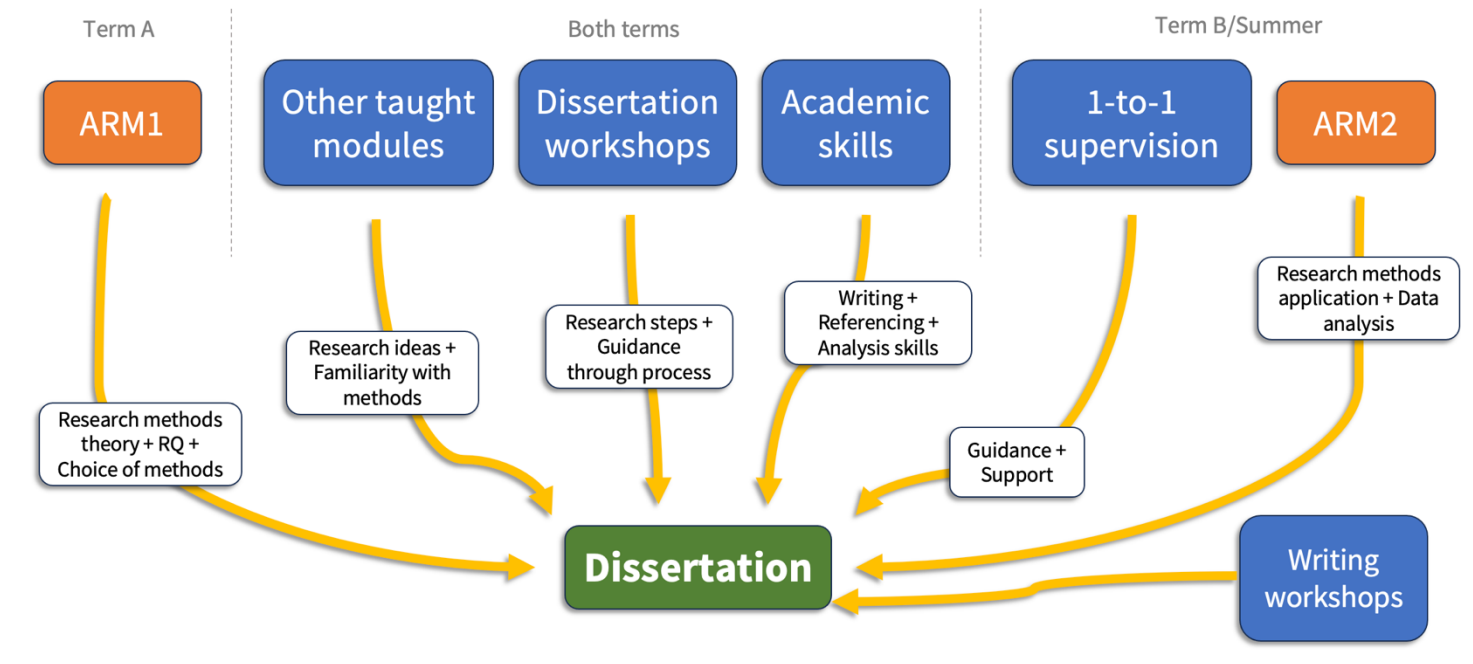
The dissertation process: iBSc students

The link between ARM1, ARM2, and your dissertations (iBSc)



The dissertation process: iMSc, MSc and MRes students

The link between ARM1, ARM2, and your dissertations (iMSc, MSc, MRes)



The dissertation process: Public Mental Health students

- Complete ARM1 assessments (annotated bibliography and research proposal) in Term 1
- Allocated supervisor from Mental Health team for second term
- Work to their deadlines and their guidance!
- Find out more on **Monday 21 October, 2:45-3:45** with Simpson and me!



What should you be doing and when

When?	iBSc	iMSc/MSc/MRes
October-December	Develop a topic, formulate research aims/questions, and devise a provisional research plan (ARM1 assessment)	Develop a topic, formulate research aims/questions, and devise a provisional research plan (ARM1 assessments)
January-March	Finalise your research plan with your supervisor, gather relevant research skills, conduct the research and start writing up	Finalise your research plan with your supervisor, gather relevant research skills (ARM2), begin to conduct the research
April-May	Finish writing up, get feedback on a whole draft and submit	Continue to conduct the research and start writing up
June-August		Finishg writing up, get feedback on a whole draft and submit

Support for your dissertation in Term 1

- 3 x Term 1 workshops
- The dissertation pages on QM Plus
- The library and study skills support
- Academic staff: ARM 1, your adviser or staff who have knowledge of your research topic
- Your supervisor (will be allocated at the start of term 2*)
- Your peers

*Unless you are an iBSc student or working with Newham or other partners



Narrowing down a topic

Forming a dissertation topic



Forming a dissertation topic



FEASIBILITY!



Activity 3:

Brainstorm topics

- In groups of 3-4, share your initial topic ideas.
- At this stage, you may have multiple ideas – that's fine! Discuss these!
- Help each other to think through the **feasibility** of different approaches to your topic
- **Remember:** Any topic can be made feasible! You just have to find ways to narrow down or approach a topic from a different angle.
- Feed questions back for discussion



Shout out!



Preparation for the next workshop

- **Workshop 2:** Develop a research question
- **In preparation for this you need to get to know your topic:** key debates, key publications and researchers, theoretical frameworks, commonly used methods etc.
- **What does the preparation entail?**



Activity 3: Plan your preparation

Take 10 mins to develop a plan of work between now and the next workshop:

1. How are you going to get to know your topic OR choose a topic?
2. What tools/activities are available to help you do this?
3. When will you do this?

Materials that will help you develop your plan:

- ARM1 assessment (for iBSc students too).
 - Your timetable.
 - The study skills area on the QM library website.
 - The Background to Issue, Rationale and Objectives section of the dissertation criteria document (see QMPlus).
 - These slides.
- 

Up and coming dissertation activities

- Keep on engaging with ARM 1!
- Once dissertation supervisor list and topic areas released – reach out and talk to them about your ideas and interests
- **Workshop 2:** Research questions
- **Workshop 3:** Research proposals



Reminder:

Policy workshop and catch-up induction



**Any
questions?**