GUIDELINES – MASTER OF SCIENCE LITERATURE REVIEW

Students are to provide a 4,000 word literature review on their research report which is due towards the end of semester 2, Year 1. An electronic copy is to be forwarded to Mary Ljubanovic E: mlju@unimelb.edu.au by 4.00pm on the due hurdle date.

This is a hurdle requirement and will not contribute towards the final grade. The review is to be assessed by an examiner nominated by the supervisor – feedback is usually provided to the student. There is no set format – ultimately this is up to the supervisor/s as to what is appropriate, but as a general guideline the thesis submission format can be used (see attached):

LAYOUT

- Text must be double-spaced throughout
- Arial or Times New Roman fonts only
- Use a minimum font size of 11
- Leave a minimum 2.5 cm margins all round the text
- A4 paper
- Number all pages in Arabic numerals (1, 2 etc). The title page may be numbered but is not preferred
- Number the Appendix (if any) in Roman numerals (I, ii, iii etc)
- Number Tables, I, II, III, IV etc and Figures 1, 2, 3 etc in order of first mention in the text
- Tables and Figures and Legends are not required to be double-spaced (figures, tables and their legends do not constitute body text)

CRITERIA:

1) Understanding and exposition of relevant issues
2) Structure and development of argument
3) Standard of critical analysis
4) Relevance and design of figures and tables (if used)
5) Evidence of wide and relevant reading
6) Evaluation and synthesis of material
7) Citation of references
8) Context for and articulation of Research Project goals
9) Quality of written text
10) Overall design and presentation

Satisfactory evaluation (ie ≥ Pass). The Literature Review is a ‘hurdle’ requirement for the Research Project component of the MSc (BHS). The grade assessed provides indicative student feedback but does not form part of the final Research Project grade (which is based entirely on the Research Project Report). If the Review is considered unsatisfactory (ie Fail), re-submission and re-evaluation is necessary. If two unsatisfactory evaluations are determined then consultation involving the Student, Supervisors, MSc (BHS) Coordinator and Stream Coordinator should be initiated by the MSc (BHS) Coordinator.
**Class H1 (80-100%)**
Student displays an excellent understanding and exposition of relevant issues in the field. The argument is clearly structured and logically developed and the review has only minor (low H1) or no (high H1) obvious weaknesses. Relevant data are clearly presented, figures and tables (if used) are relevant and are part of the overall argument and their sources are acknowledged. The evaluation and synthesis of a wide range of material is excellent and the standard of critical analysis throughout is high. References are correctly cited and conform to the style of a discipline-appropriate scientific journal. The text is clearly written in unambiguous, readable English. Overall design and presentation of the literature review is good. Rationale and segue to Research Project goals very clear.

**Class H2A (75-79%)**
Overall the student displays a good understanding and exposition of the relevant issues, but there are notable weaknesses in a few areas. For example, the review may not be well structured, the argument not fully developed or some of the relevant data has been omitted. Figures and tables (if used) are appropriate (but may not integrated into the argument) and there is evidence of further reading. The critical analysis is of an adequate standard. References are correctly cited and conform to the style of an appropriate scientific journal. The text is clearly written in unambiguous, readable English. Overall design and presentation are good. Annotate the document to indicate areas for development, correction and/or improvement.

**H2B (70-74%)**
Overall the student shows an adequate understanding and exposition of relevant issues but there notable weaknesses in several areas. For example, the argument is reasonably clear but isn’t fully developed and there is a limited presentation and explanation of relevant research. Figures and tables are not well presented or are not part of the argument (i.e., they serve a decorative purpose only). Limited amount of relevant reading mostly of secondary sources (reviews, etc.) and the material has been insufficiently evaluated. References are mostly correct and appear in both the text and reference list. Writing is not consistently clear and there is a need for some sentences to be reworded. Overall presentation is adequate.

**Class H3 (65-69%) and Pass**
Overall the student shows a poor understanding of the relevant issues and there are major weaknesses throughout the review. The arguments are unclear and the relevant data often lacking. There is poor use of figures and tables and little evidence of relevant reading. The evaluation of material is superficial and the synthesis is poor. There are frequent errors and omissions in the text and the writing style is poor, with many sentences in need of correction. Overall presentation of the review is substandard.

**Fail**
The work is of unacceptable standard and indicates that the student has insufficient grasp of the research field, minimal capacity to synthesize material, inadequate expression skills and inability to contextualize the Research Project. The evaluation indicates that the student would not be expected to be able to produce a Research Project Report of adequate standard.