



The Institute of Chiropodists and Podiatrists

*Supporting HCPC Registered Health Professionals*



## **Guidelines for Writing a Dissertation**

**The Award of Academic Fellowship of the Institute of  
Chiropodists and Podiatrists.**





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## Introduction

The most important process for all applicants undertaking a dissertation is they **MUST** read, follow, and understand the dissertation criteria/ guidelines provided. It will benefit applicants to obtain the best possible advantage to increase understanding and preparation for applicants intending to write for recognition as a Fellow of the Institute of Chiropodist and Podiatrists (FInstChP).

The chosen topic will be assessed for suitability of the Award of Academic Fellowship through discussion around a chiropody/ podiatry related topic. Applicants will be required to demonstrate the development of skills that address the identification, exploration and critical analysis of researched evidence associated with the applicant's chosen topic.

In order to help applicants, this guide is provided as an overview on how to structure the intended dissertation. To begin with the dissertation should be a maximum of **5,000 words** (excluding the abstract, references, tables, diagrams, graphs, reference list and bibliography). When applicants submit their dissertation, they will also need to submit the Fellowship application and any other relevant information and evidence, such as HCPC registration number; Institute of Chiropodists and Podiatrists (IOCP) membership number, C.V, and certificates.



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The aims and outcomes of writing the dissertation can be understood in the following ways:

1. Pick a topic that is relevant to chiropody and podiatry practice, of interest to the applicant, which will enhance the applicants understanding and comprehension during the composition of a relevant literature review.
2. Independently search for information and literature that will allow the applicant to demonstrate a clear understanding of their chosen topic, using a wide variety of sources.
3. Applicants will be able to apply and demonstrate how the literature provides an evidence base to support chiropody and podiatry practice. And present an analytic discussion on the quality and nature of their research around the topic undertaken.
4. Applicants should present the information in a logical, sequential, and articulate manner, demonstrating critical thinking and processes. Ensuring that discussions are clear, and the salient points are made.
5. Applicants should be able to demonstrate the ability to understand, question and challenge information used within the writing, using the literature to support these analytical discussions with Harvard referencing guidelines.
6. Applicants should summarise their findings and/or offer recommendations for future practice, if applicable.



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## **A Guide to Academic Integrity and Good Academic Practice.**

A primary purpose of the level of the fellowship award is to instil in each applicant an understanding of, and a capacity for scholarship, independent judgment, academic rigour, and intellectual honesty.

Good academic practice refers to the process of completing your academic work independently, honestly and in an appropriate academic style, using good referencing and acknowledging all sources.

To demonstrate good academic practice, an applicant must:

- Demonstrate a good command of English writing skills, appropriate language, and grammar, and avoid any colloquialisms.
- develop their own independent evaluation of academic issues.
- draw upon research from academics in the related or relevant chiropody or podiatry field of study.
- discuss and evaluate existing concepts and theories.
- demonstrate their understanding of the key literature.
- develop their own arguments.

To support applicants, own good academic practice, applicants will need to develop:

- study and information skills (e.g., reading, note-taking, research etc).
- skills of critical enquiry and evaluation (e.g., taking a balanced opinion, using reasoning and argument).
- appropriate academic writing skills (e.g., for essays, reports, dissertations, etc).
- referencing skills.
- examination techniques (e.g., preparation and timing etc).

Achieving good academic practice is not as complicated as it may appear. In a nutshell, applicants need to make sure all sources are referenced.



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## **Poor Academic Practice**

Poor academic practice or academic dishonesty (plagiarism, cheating, fraud etc.) is sometimes caused by insecurity as to what is expected and what is allowed. If applicants are in any doubt, contact the Head Office.

We expect applicants to agree that they will:

- i) ensure they are familiar with the academic conventions regarding the citing (acknowledgement, referencing) of the work of others.
- ii) only hand in their own original work for assessment.
- iii) correctly reference all the sources for the information that has been included in their dissertation.
- iv) identify information they have downloaded from the internet.
- v) never use another individual's work as if it were their own work.
- vi) never use someone else's artwork, pictures, or graphics (including graphs, spreadsheets etc. and information from the internet) as if they were made by the applicant.



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## **COMPLETING AND PRESENTATION OF THE DISSERTATION**

The dissertation must be word-processed. Double line or 1.5 line spacing must be used and the font size should be 10 – 12 pt.

- ❖ The word count used should also be clearly typed at the end of the dissertation.
- ❖ Applicants should ensure that each page is numbered.
- ❖ Applicants should make sure they provide their HCPC and IOCP membership numbers to the top right-hand corner of the dissertation.
- ❖ Ensure the dissertation is completely author anonymous, and this includes anonymity and confidentiality of any patient, clients and staff/ employers or place of work, featured within the dissertation.
- ❖ Applicant's dissertation must be completed individually and presented as their own work.
- ❖ Applicant's dissertation should be presented using an appropriate structure and headings with an introduction, main body of the work and conclusion.
  - Please write using essay style format (not bullet points)
  - Write in paragraphs and include an introduction and a conclusion.
  - The introduction should set the scene for the essay and what is intended to be discussed.
  - The conclusion should summarise your key points or ideas and conclude with your recommendations.
- ❖ Applicants should use appropriate language and grammar and avoid any colloquialisms.
- ❖ To avoid plagiarism can be achieved by using direct quotes or preferably paraphrasing of other people's quotes/ work with accurate and appropriate in-text citations and applying these references to the reference list.
- ❖ Applicants must ensure the use of the Harvard referencing system for intext citations and the reference list.
- ❖ Applicant's dissertations must be submitted as a word document, and not in PDF.
- ❖ Applicants are only permitted two submissions for feedback on their dissertation.



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## **Dissertation Structure (suggested guide only).**

**Contents page:** This is not mandatory but can be provided at the beginning of the work. This page is not included in the total word count.

**Page numbers:** Required throughout the dissertation and should be applied to the contents page if used.

**Abstract:** Usually about 200-300 words – this is not included in the total word count

**The Introduction:** About 500 words and will be the rationale of why the applicant has chosen their subject matter. It enables applicants to put their own perception or instruction to the reader, such as: - This subject of study is ... to explore the issues surrounding .... Or the researcher would like to explore the belief ... or the researcher believed that ... Or I would like to explore ... a view of ... degree of podiatry health, etc. It may incorporate why the applicant is interested in the proposed writing, such as I am interested in this because or, an incident happened, etc., in this area of practice... An Introduction should also be a gradual shaping of what the applicants intend to discuss in the main body of their work and especially defining their response to the title of the dissertation.

**Main body:** About 3000-4000 words, which may include methods, study designs, methodologies, samples, and discussions to comply with the aims of the dissertation, and critically analyse and evaluate the topic chosen.





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**Literature review:** For the applicants chosen topic it should include the main, current sources on the topic. This review comprises of information sources from texts, magazine and paper articles, research papers, etc., which help to explore the subject matter. This is also useful for referencing purposes surrounding the discussions raised to form the in-text references, reference list and bibliography, as necessary.

**Ethical issues:** Applicants may wish to consider the need of ethics and ethical matters surrounding their chosen topic.

**Limitations:** Applicants may consider what barriers limit practitioners in providing treatments or other relevant to their chosen topic?

## **Recommendations**

**for future practice:** Applicants may consider the possibility of any recommendations from their evaluations and analysis around their topic that may be suggested or with evidence for future practice (500 words).

**Conclusion:** About 200-300 words. A summary of what has been discussed and concluded in the dissertation.

**Total word count:** Should be written after the conclusion and before the reference list. The total word count excludes in-text references.



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## **Tables, diagrams,**

### **and graphs:**

May be provided in the work, but must be appropriately labelled i.e., Table 1, figure 1 or diagram 1 and be in chronological order. Each table or other in the text should also be appropriately referenced and placed where they will be relevant to the issues being discussed.

## **Headings and**

### **sub-headings:**

May be used in the dissertation to help the order of discussions and issues raised.

## **Reference list:**

Not included in the total word count.

## **Bibliography:**

Not included in the total word count (if provided).

## **Appendix:**

No appendices will be accepted as part of this dissertation.

Applicants, where possible, should look at other dissertations to guide them in the art of structure, content and the how, what, why, where and when's to enable the discussions on their chosen chiropody/ podiatry related subject matter. There are many good sources of information for writing essays and writing reflectively online and in books to support applicants with their writing. Lastly, while doing any form of research and looking at various research papers, these papers are a good indication of how to construct a good study and the research involved to aid writing a dissertation. Applicants may wish to look at how each paper is laid out, the author's writing styles, research tools, etc. A good researcher not only gains important information on the chosen subject matter and the hopes of finding gaps in the knowledge, but research papers can also help in many other ways too, if looked at closely enough.

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