



# **Sreenarayanaguru Open University**

## **GUIDELINES FOR UG DISSERTATION/ PROJECT**

### **BA History Programme**

#### **B21HS01PR**

## **1. Introduction**

As a part of the Undergraduate Curriculum, learners are required to submit a Dissertation/Project Report (Individual) to the University through the Learner Support Centre in their Sixth Semester which will be evaluated by the external examiner. The BA dissertation/project, offered in the sixth semester, is a core component of all undergraduate programmes at Sreenarayanaguru Open University (SGOU). This course carries six credits and is designed to give learners an opportunity to engage in independent research in the field of history. Under the guidance of a faculty supervisor, each learner selects a topic and develops a project through a process that combines academic inquiry and research skills. The following is not an exact guide but rather a general outline.

## **2. Selection of Topic for Project**

Selecting an appropriate topic is a crucial step in preparing a dissertation or project report, as it sets the overall direction of the research. The quality and timely completion of the work largely depend on making a thoughtful choice. A suitable topic should reflect your personal interest, meet academic requirements, and be feasible within the given timeframe. When chosen carefully, it ensures that the research remains relevant, addresses existing gaps, and contributes meaningfully to the field of study.

### **Steps for Selecting a Suitable Topic:**

#### **1. Identify your Topic:**

Reflect on your academic background, prior knowledge, and areas within your discipline that genuinely engage you. A topic aligned with your passion will sustain motivation throughout the research journey.

#### **2. Review existing literature:**

Examine recent dissertations, journal articles, and conference papers to understand current debates and highlight gaps where further research is needed.

#### **3. Assess feasibility:**

Consider the availability of data, sources, and resources. Ensure that the research can be realistically completed within the prescribed timeframe.

4. **Aim for originality:**

While it is important to build on existing scholarship, strive for a topic that presents a fresh perspective or explores an under-researched area.

5. **Seek guidance from your supervisor:**

Discuss possible ideas with your guide or supervisor, who can offer valuable suggestions and help refine your choices based on their expertise.

6. **Refine your focus:**

Narrow down your topic into a well-defined research question and establish a clear scope to avoid making the study too broad or vague.

7. **Formulate a title:**

Create a title that is concise, descriptive, and reflective of your study's scope and objectives.

## **2.2 Executing the Research Project**

Carrying out a research project involves several key steps, including collecting data, analysing and interpreting it, and finally drawing conclusions and generalisations based on your findings. There are many research methods available to help you design, conduct, and analyse your study, and these can be approached and categorised in different ways depending on your topic and objectives.

Throughout the entire process, stay in regular contact with your supervisor. Their feedback, suggestions for relevant sources, and overall guidance can be invaluable in keeping your research focused and on track.

## **3. Writing Research Project**

The Project work shall contain the followings:

### **1. The Cover Page**

The cover page must include the following:

- Title of the dissertation/project
- Name of the learner
- Enrollment number
- Programme name (BA History)
- Name of the university (Sreenarayanaguru Open University)
- Submission date

## **2. Certificate**

**Certificate from the Supervisor:** Signed by the supervisor certifying that the work is original and completed under their guidance.

## **3. Declaration by the learner**

A statement signed by the learner declaring that the dissertation/project is their original work.

## **4. Acknowledgement**

A brief section where learners express gratitude to those who supported them in the completion of the project.

## **5. Table of Contents**

Contents page with details of Chapter division, Chapter Number, Chapter titles and Page Numbers

The structure of the dissertation should follow this format:

## **6. Dissertation Chapters**

The Main Text includes 3 chapters, including introduction and conclusion.

**1. Introduction with scope, objectives of the study, Review of literature**

**2. Methodology**

**3. Analysis**

**Chapter I: (with Endnotes)**

**Chapter II (with Endnotes)**

**Chapter III (with Endnotes)**

**4. Conclusion**

**5. Bibliography (Include all sources cited in the dissertation in MLA 8th edition style as given below)**

**6. Appendix**

## **4. Review of Literature**

A dissertation is an opportunity to show that you have a deep understanding of your field. To do this, you must engage with a wide range of scholarships related to your topic. Most dissertations include a dedicated literature review section. A literature review allows you to build a thorough understanding of existing research in your area, identify gaps where little work has been done, and position your study to add fresh insights. It also guides you in choosing appropriate research methods by learning from what has worked in previous studies. In addition, it gives context and evidence for your own arguments, making them stronger and more convincing.

### **Steps to Conduct a Literature Review:**

**a) Define Scope and Objectives:** Clearly determine what your literature review will cover and set clear goals for what you want to achieve. Decide which aspects of the topic you will focus on.

**b) Search and Gather:** Use academic databases, libraries, and trusted sources to collect relevant material. Keep a record of everything you find for proper citation later.

**c) Read and Analyse:** Critically read the selected works, taking notes on key findings, research methods, and areas where studies disagree or leave unanswered questions.

**d) Organise and Synthesise:** Group the literature into themes or categories. Summarise and connect the findings to reveal major trends, ongoing debates, and gaps that your research can address.

## **5. Typographical Instructions**

### **Recommended Total Pages:**

A minimum of 30 pages

- Place all page numbers to the left of the page, 1' from the bottom right edge.
- The pagination on the first page should be hidden.

## 6. Layout, Formatting, and Printing

- The project should focus on any social issue relevant to the study of History.
- It must incorporate both primary and secondary sources of data.
- The length of the report should be between a minimum of 25 pages, typed and spiral-bound.
- Paper size should strictly be A4.
- The prescribed font is *Times New Roman*. Main titles should be in font size 14/15 (bold), while the body text should be in size 12 (regular).
- Formatting rules: maintain double spacing between lines (as per MLA style) and between paragraphs, with no extra spacing beyond that.
- Each chapter should begin on a new page.
- Double space between paragraphs.
- Chapter headings (bold/centred) must be identical
- Chapter Headings: Times New Roman, Size 16, Bold, Double Spacing, Centre of Page
- Sub-headings: Times New Roman, Size 14, Bold, 1.5 Spacing, Justified alignment
- Body: Times New Roman, Size 12, 1.5 Spacing, Justified alignment
- Page Margins of 2.5 cm on each side

**Examples of References/ Bibliography formatting according to MLA style is given below.**

**1. Book:**

1) **(Single author)** Author's Last Name, First Name. *Title of Book*. Publisher, Year.

**Example:** Thapar, Romila. *Early India: From the Origins to AD 1300*. University of California Press, 2004.

2) **(Two authors)** First Author's Last Name, First Name, and Second Author's First Name Last Name. *Title of Book*. Publisher, Year.

**Example:** Leffler, Melvyn P., and Odd Arne Westad. *The Cambridge History of the Cold War: Vol. 1. Origins*. Cambridge University Press, 2010.

## 2. Articles from Journals:

Author Last Name, First Name. "Capitalised Title of Article." *Capitalised and Italicized Journal Title*, vol. #, no. #, season or month + year, page numbers. *Capitalized, Italicized Name of Database if Applicable*, URL OR DOI (in URL form).

**Example:** Bayly, C. A. "The British Indian Empire and the Transition to Colonialism." *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 19, no. 3, 1985, pp. 593–621. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/312383](http://www.jstor.org/stable/312383).

## 3. Website:

Author(s). "Title of Article." Title of Website in Italics, Website Publisher (if different from title), Date of Publication, URL. Access date.

**Example:** Halsall, Paul. "Internet History Sourcebooks Project." *Fordham University History Department*, 1996, <https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/>. Accessed 10 September 2025.

## 7. Assessment and Evaluation

The purpose of the dissertation/project report is to enable you to demonstrate your capacity to carry out a substantial piece of independent research work on a selected topic of your choice.

The evaluation of the dissertation/project report carries a total of **100 marks**, distributed as follows:

### 1. 70 Marks For Dissertation/ Project Evaluation

**2. 30 Marks for Viva Voce Examination (based on the dissertation project/report )**

**8. Criteria of Evaluation**

- 1.Introduction- 5 Marks**
- 2. Objectives- 5 Marks**
- 3. Statement of Problem - 5 Marks**
- 4. Review of literature - 5 Marks**
- 5. Methodology - 10 Marks**
- 6. Analysis - 20 Marks**
- 7.Findings and Conclusion - 15 Marks**
- 8. Bibliography -5 Marks**

The final dissertation/project will be evaluated based on:

- a. Novelty and originality
- b. Quality and coherence
- c. Inclusion of necessary components such as methodology and framework
- d. Overall contribution to knowledge

**9. Dissertation Supervisor**

Active supervision by an experienced teacher is the most important aspect of any project work. The learner should finalise the topics in consultation with the Supervisor and seek his/her approval well in time.

**Supervisor Eligibility**

Dissertation/project supervisors may be drawn from the following categories:

1. Full-time faculty members of Sreenarayanaguru Open University
2. Academic counsellors associated with the University.
3. Existing faculty members in government or aided colleges (guest lecturer or permanent faculty) with relevant expertise.
4. Retired faculty members who have experience in research supervision.

5. Ph.D. holders in the relevant subject/discipline.

### **Bio Data cum Certificate of Supervisor**

Submit the Bio Data cum Certificate of your supervisor in the prescribed format (See Annexure I) along with your Dissertation/Project Report to the Learner Support Centre, before the last date notified by the University for Submission.

## **10. Academic Integrity**

Learners should be aware of various forms of academic misconduct which are not encouraged.

- 1. Plagiarism:** Using others' ideas or words without proper attribution
- 2. Self-plagiarism:** Reusing one's own previously submitted work without acknowledgment
- 3. Fabrication:** Inventing or manipulating data or sources
- 4. Cheating:** Unauthorised assistance in academic work
- 5. Misrepresentation:** Providing false information about academic work
- 6. Unauthorized collaboration:** Working with others when individual work is required.

These forms of misconduct will lead to cancellation of the report and punishments as per University Regulations.

## **11. Dissertation Submission**

- Learners must submit one hard copy of the completed dissertation/project by the end of the semester.
- The dissertation should be spiral-bound with double-sided printing.
- Do not use plastics as cover, facing sheet or for lamination.
- Learners may choose to submit either a printed or handwritten dissertation. Printed dissertations should not exceed 25 pages, while handwritten dissertations may go up to a maximum of 30 pages.
- The project must be submitted on or before the last date notified for submission to the Learner Support Centre.

- The learner must attend a viva voce of the dissertation project for the completion of the course on a date and venue notified by the University.
- One hard copy of the dissertation should be kept by the learner and brought while appearing for the Viva Voce Examination.
- It is advisable to retain a soft copy of the dissertation by the learners.
- The dissertation must be written entirely in a single language, either English or Malayalam. Mixing of languages is not permitted.

## **12. Sample Areas for the Preparation of Dissertation**

The following is a spread of sample areas which can be chosen by the learners for preparing the projects/dissertations:

- 1. Political History**
- 2. Social and Cultural History**
- 3. Economic History**
- 4. Environmental History**
- 5. Historiography**
- 6. Educational History**
- 7. Gender History**
- 8. Oral History**
- 9. Local History**
- 10. Maritime History**
- 11. Contemporary History**

**1. Name: ..... (As in service records)**

**2. Designation & official Address:**

.....  
.....  
.....

**3. Communication Address:**

.....  
.....  
.....

**(a) Mobile No(s) :**

**(b) Email ID:**

**Category of the Supervisor: Please put a tick mark ( )**

<b>Full-time faculty member of Sreenarayanaguru Open University.</b>	
<b>Faculty members in government or aided colleges (guest/contract/permanent faculty)</b>	
<b>Retired faculty member of government/aided colleges or Universities.</b>	
<b>Academic Counsellor associated with the Sreenarayanaguru Open University</b>	
<b>Ph.D. holders in the relevant subject/discipline</b>	

**Date of Regular Appointment in Academic/ Research Institute (Govt./Aided Colleges or University ):**

**Date/Month/Year** ....../...../....

**Completed years of service** .....

- **Retired**
- **In Service**

**Educational & Professional Qualifications:**

<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Degree</b>	<b>Year Of Passing</b>	<b>Subject/ Discipline/ Specialization</b>	<b>University</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Masters Degree</b>			
<b>2.</b>	<b>Doctoral Degree</b>			
<b>3.</b>	<b>Other</b>			
<b>4.</b>				
<b>5.</b>				

**Teaching Experience : As on the date of submission of Bio Data Cum Certificate**

(a) Under Graduate Level ..... years.....months

(b) Post Graduate Level ..... years.....months

**Field of Specialization/Special Interest(if any):**

1. ....
2. ....

## **Willingness to work as Project/Dissertation Supervisor – UG Programmes**

I am willing to serve as Project/Dissertation Supervisor for the UG programme of Sreenarayanaguru Open University subject to the rules in force. I hereby declare that the details furnished above are true and correct to the best of my knowledge. In case any of the above information is found to be false or misleading or misrepresenting, I am aware that I may be held liable for it and my empanelment as Project/Dissertation Supervisor may be immediately cancelled and necessary action, as deemed fit, may be taken against me.

Date.....

Signature .....

Name.....

**CERTIFICATE**

It is certified that the work contained in the thesis titled “.....

.....

.....

....., ”by“ .....

..... (Name of the Learner)”

has been carried out under my/our supervision and that this work has not been submitted elsewhere for a degree/diploma/certificate.

Signature of the Supervisor

Name :

Official Address :

**DECLARATION**

This is to certify that the thesis titled.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

has been authored by me. It presents the research conducted by me under the supervision of  
..... To the best of my  
knowledge, it is an original work, both in terms of research content and narrative, and has not  
been submitted elsewhere, in part or in full, for a degree/diploma/certificate. Further, due credit  
has been attributed to the relevant state-of-the-art and collaborations (if any) with appropriate  
citations and acknowledgements, in line with established norms and practices.

Signature of the Learner

Name :

Address:

**DISSERTATION TITLE**

*In partial fulfilment of the requirement  
of the degree of (Name of the Program)*

*Submitted by :*

**FULL NAME OF THE LEARNER**

**Enrollment Number**

**Program Name**

**Under the Supervision of :**

**NAME OF THE SUPERVISOR**



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OPEN UNIVERSITY**

**SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY**

**MONTH & YEAR OF SUBMISSION**