

Dear All BPharm Students

This special edition of the script is being delivered to you on behalf of the 4th years. We would like to pass on our wisdom and advice regarding dissertations, of which you will inevitably be a part of in your final year. Therefore to assist you we have compiled and developed the following document.

This document shall be used by all subsequent years and our legacy shall be passed on from generation to generation.

The Script Presents

The Official

Dissertation

Rules of Engagement

*RULE #1: Keep your friends far and your enemies
even further*

*This Rule should be followed at all times prior to selecting your preferences for dissertation. So it is highly recommended that you put your investigative caps and ask around to see what other people's preferences are. This will in turn help you to make your important decision. You should stay away from your friends unless you are **ABSOLUTELY** sure that you can work well with them with no friction. Let's face it by the end of the year you're bound to hate on at least half the members of your group if not all of them, therefore if you want to stay friends after you graduate then tread carefully. It is also equally as important to determine what people you don't like are choosing (Come on we're sure you are thinking of at least one person in your class as soon as we said that) because you don't want to spend 9 months dealing with drama!*

***RULE#2: Pick your topic and supervisors
carefully***

Well this seems like common sense but sometimes people don't consider all aspects. Sometimes it may be a better idea to pick a topic which you find slightly less interesting if you know you feel like a particular supervisor will allow you to work better. Different people work better under different supervisors so weigh up your options carefully. Feel free to ask people from previous years, we may be brutally honest, or we may screw you over just to make you suffer as we did. Interest in the topic is always a bonus because by the end of the year you are going to be sick of the topic so it's a good idea to start on a high point and slowly decline. However thou shalt never forget RULE #1!!! This is always your first priority.

RULE#3: Get close! You're going to have to get used to it!

You're dissertation group whether you like it or not (probably not) will be an extension of you. They will practically be your family, although in some cases you're probably going to see them more than any family member. It is amazing on how many people demand that everyone be doing the exact same task at the exact same time; therefore you are going to have to spend countless hours doing minor tasks with this new found "family". It appears within the years of doing group work no one has grasped the concept of delegation so you're eventually going to have to get used to this impracticality.

RULE #4: Pick your role carefully

It is important in the first few weeks of your dissertation to feel out your group and determine the best course of action. If you have an overpowering personality and someone else in your group is the same then you are going to have a problem. You need to decide early if you're going to take a back seat in organising and just do your part, or if you want to establish yourself as the alpha member. Either way if you establish this early there is less likelihood for conflict! If you're the passive type then you better hope and pray someone else in your group isn't so that someone is at least pushing you to get things done.

RULE #5: If you think you are right, hell, you probably are

We can guarantee that a member of your group will do something... "Incorrectly" (to put it in politically correct terms). Depending on who this is it can be relatively minor. But how do people deal with this?

- 1. Take the non confrontational approach: Spend the time to correct their mistake; this can take from as little as a couple of minutes to possibly hours depending on the extent.*
- 2. Take the passive aggressive approach: This is similar to the passive approach except you bottle up your anger and vent to all your friends. Furthermore you will allocate the particular person only tasks you believe can be done by them. In most cases this will be a consequence of attempting the first approach.*
- 3. Take the confrontational approach: This is relatively self-explanatory! This can prevent the same thing happening again or make everything 10x worse.*

So what's the best approach you ask? Unfortunately we can't tell you that. It all depends on who you are, so pick your poison.

RULE# 6: Beware of your VDP!!

What's a VDP you ask? Your very difficult person! (If that is most likely you please stop reading you do not deserve our advice). That's right unless you are extremely lucky you will have one. If you don't I suggest you go by yourself a lottery ticket that night, but then again you may have used all the luck you have for that year so be careful nothing bad happens to you on your way home. So firstly how do you identify your VDP? It really isn't that hard. All you have to do is look out for the person that makes the most miniscule task seem like it is the most difficult thing they have ever done. If it takes them 6 hours to do it you should probably do it yourself in 30 minutes and save yourself from hearing them whine about how they do so much work, when in fact they do jack! Best thing to do is to either take the previously mentioned passive aggressive approach or put them in their place and tell them to stop b****ing!

RULE #7: What your supervisor says isn't law

This dissertation is just as much yours as it is your supervisors. We aren't condoning confrontation with your supervisors, not at all! However if you feel there is a better solution to something it is always open for discussion so make sure you make your views heard, they may be equally as valid.