**Teaching and Learning Centre podcasts: the DISSERTATION SERIES**

**A planning checklist**

(adapted from Bryman, A. (2016) Social Research Methods. Fifth Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p.87)

* Do you know what your departmental guidelines and requirements? (e.g. formatting, word count -including appendices or not?)(e.g. must/must *not* involve primary empirical research; strictly literature-based research preferred/required/discouraged)
* Have you drafted some clear research questions?
* Have you discussed your project and your research questions with your supervisor? Does your supervisor find the scope of your project appropriate (e.g. feasible? related to your discipline?)
* Have you allotted sufficient time to plan, conduct, and write-up your research project?
* Do you have a clear timetable for your research project – with clear milestones and clear, specific, and achievable tasks? (e.g. something more specific than “collect data” – draft interview topic guide, pilot interview, redraft topic guide, conduct two interviews, transcribe 2 interviews, review transcription, etc. )
* In addition to time, do you have the practical resources required to carry out this project (e.g. recording equipment, software, funds for travel)?
* Do you know what kind of data / materials (e.g. data from governmental departments or archives, international organisation databases, press clippings) you need and how to locate, access, and sample them?
* Do you know what kind of participants you need (e.g. interviewees, survey respondents, experimental participants) and how you will recruit and sample them?
* Do you have access to the materials and/or participants that are required for your projects (e.g. library reader pass, access to archives or documents, institutional clearances/permission to meet with research participants)
* Do you have the necessary skills to use any equipment or software that is part of your research plan? (e.g. NVivo, Stata, SPSS, video cameras)
* Have you established which method(s) you will use, and why you’ve chosen to use it/them?
* Have you arranged to show your draft work (outline, abstract, texts, etc.) to others, and allowed enough time to respond to feed back?
* Have you considered whether there are any potential ethical issues around your project and how you are planning to carry it out? If applicable, have you allowed time for any required ethical review board clearances?