

Dissertation Timeline & Milestone Tracker

SmartWritinghelp.com | Free Template | Fill in your start date and let the phases guide your schedule

Your Dissertation Details

Your Name	
Degree Level	
Dissertation Title / Working Title	
Supervisor Name	
Official Start Date	
Submission Deadline	
Viva / Defense Date	
Target Word Count	

Phase-by-Phase Milestone Schedule

Fill in your target dates based on your submission deadline. Work backwards from the deadline, not forwards from today.

Phase	Key Milestone	Target Date	Completed?	Notes
1. Topic & Proposal	Research question finalised		<input type="checkbox"/>	
1. Topic & Proposal	Proposal submitted & approved		<input type="checkbox"/>	
1. Topic & Proposal	Ethics application submitted		<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Literature Review	Synthesis Matrix completed		<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Literature Review	Literature review first draft		<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Literature Review	Supervisor feedback received		<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Literature Review	Literature review final draft		<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Methodology	Research design finalised		<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Methodology	Methodology chapter first draft		<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Methodology	Data collection begins		<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Methodology	Data collection complete		<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Findings & Analysis	Data analysis complete		<input type="checkbox"/>	

4. Findings & Analysis	Findings chapter first draft		<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Findings & Analysis	Discussion chapter first draft		<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Full Draft	Complete first draft submitted to supervisor		<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Full Draft	Supervisor feedback received		<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Full Draft	Introduction & conclusion written		<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Full Draft	Abstract written		<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Final Submission	Full proofread complete		<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Final Submission	PDF/A compliance check passed		<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Final Submission	Reference list verified		<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Final Submission	Dissertation submitted		<input type="checkbox"/>	

Supervisor Contact Log

Record every meeting and email exchange. Send meeting minutes to your supervisor within 24 hours.

Date	Meeting Type	Key Points Agreed	Your Action	Deadline	Supervisor Response
	Email / Meeting				
	Email / Meeting				
	Email / Meeting				
	Email / Meeting				
	Email / Meeting				
	Email / Meeting				
	Email / Meeting				
	Email / Meeting				

Weekly Word Count Tracker

Track your weekly output. The completion forecast updates automatically if you use this in Google Sheets.

Week	Date	Chapter Working On	Words Written This Week	Running Total	% of Target
Week 1					
Week 2					
Week 3					
Week 4					
Week 5					
Week 6					
Week 7					
Week 8					
Week 9					
Week 10					
Week 11					
Week 12					
Week 13					
Week 14					
Week 15					
Week 16					

How to Use This Tracker

1. Fill in your submission deadline first, then work backwards to set target dates for each phase.
2. Build in at least two buffer weeks before your submission date for final proofreading and unexpected delays.
3. Update the Supervisor Contact Log after every interaction. If supervision fails, your log is your evidence.
4. Use the weekly word count tracker to catch slippage early. If you miss a week, double your output the next week — do not reschedule your deadline.