

Mentoring Guidelines for Diploma Study in Associative Economics

January 2007

The following guidelines outline developmental rather than judgemental expectations and are agreed with the student before becoming 'operative'. The aim of the mentoring is to help the student to identify and meet such expectations. It is especially intended to assist in developing familiarity with concepts, debates, and theories in topic area(s) and identifying and/or formulating potential practicable policies in those area(s).

1. General

Be well-planned and organised.
Make objectives of the portfolio clear.
Identify anticipated outcomes.
Devise clear structure.
Match pace and delivery to capacities.
Avoid undue brevity or elaboration / haste or delay.
Include variety.

2. Methods/Approach

Choose methods/approaches suitable to achieving stated objectives.
Aim for clear explanation.
Use appropriate examples and analogies.
Identify alternative approaches.

3. Essays (Written, televisual or otherwise)

The main purpose of essays (written or in other formats) is to demonstrate to oneself, and thus to others, that one is competent and at home in associative economics, both in regard to terminology used and the application of the ideas to real events.

The length of essays is best kept to 2,000 words (or the equivalent) for chapter length - for example, when one is focussing on a specific aspect; and 6,000 words when it is more in the manner of a dissertation, such as a major writing up of an area - for example, several chapters that comprise a section.

The number and type of essays is up to the student and will depend on the way he/she is approaching the subject.

It may help to structure the essay in four main parts:

1. Describe the phenomenon.
2. Rehearse everyone else's point of view.
3. Discuss synthetically.
4. Offer insights/recommendations of one's own (normative comments).

Be concise!

Ensure relevance to study.

Achieve analytical depth (description → analysis → insight).

Emphasise key points and summarise them in the conclusion.

Originality (self-declared; in what way new or original?).

Pay attention to quality, type (e.g. empirical) and amount of evidence.

Aim to be up-to-date.

Bibliography – essential, pertinent, and 'of wider relevance'

Check for unintended plagiarism? (yes/no)

Check for copyright permissions? (yes/no)

Marking, undertaken for guidance purposes, is based on the following considerations:

| | |
|--|-------|
| Quality and use of sources and quotes | 10 |
| Presentation | 7 |
| Standard of English | 10 |
| Clarity of structure | 10 |
| Survey of arguments and width of reading | 10 |
| Understanding and appreciation of subject | 10 |
| Focus and coherence of argument | 10 |
| Data quality, factual content and accuracy | 10 |
| Original or critical thought | 10 |
| Exciting read | 7 |
| Length | 6 |
| | ----- |
| Total | 100 |

4. Presentation/Writing Guidelines

Attractive titles (overall, chapter, section, subsection)
Structure of chapter headings
Fit of headings to text
Balance of amount of text under each heading
Structure/sequence of text (sentence to sentence/paragraph to paragraph)
Logic
Clear and consistent focus on the topic
Language (decisive factor is clarity)
Scholarly style (especially avoiding inappropriate or excessive normative statements)
Styles and formatting as simple as possible (to facilitate e-transfer)
Figures, tables, equations and text boxes as appropriate
Footnote references – be consistent to chosen style (consider www.libs.uga.edu/ref/chicago.html).
Bibliographic references – be consistent to chosen style (consider www.libs.uga.edu/ref/chicago.html).

Note: Special attention should be paid to correct punctuation and consistent formatting. Formatting styles should be agreed at the outset. A basic working knowledge of Word and Excel is assumed.

5. Presentational Resources

OHTs, slides, video, Powerpoint, handouts, and such others as agreed.
They should be well produced, free from error, clearly presentable and readily legible.
Ensure the use of such resources enhances rather than detracts from the portfolio.
When presenting, be confident, enthusiastic, clear and audible.

6. Sample Portfolio Outline

The use of a portfolio format is intended to demonstrate practical competence rather than mere academic ability. The following template indicates the type of thing expected. It is not definitive, however, as not all elements will be relevant to every portfolio. Indeed, the student may well add some of his own.

Abstract
100 words.

Aim of Study
1-page maximum describing the aim of the study.

Overview and Introduction
A chapter setting out the area to be studied, themes to be considered, methodology employed and criteria used to assess results.

Themes

A revisable list of themes that develop as the study proceeds.

Methodology

The choice of methodology is up to the student, but it should be pertinent to the study undertaken.

Criteria

How will the study meet its objective?

'Chapters' of Study

Of length and number to be decided by student. 'Chapter' can mean written text, illustrated theme, a video or other component.

Results

Self-assessment of the study in terms of the student's chosen criteria.

Micro/Macro

Explanation of how the case is a micro version of a macro policy.

Bridging

How the study demonstrates or builds a bridge from associative economics to current-day realities.

Biographical Exercise

Description of an event or person in economic history in terms of associative economics.

Reading Material / Bibliography

A main concern should be that the bibliography reflects the bridging aspect between associative economics and contemporary literature.

Timeline

Timetable and planning of study.

Portfolio Finances

How the portfolio project is financed.

7. Progress Evaluation

The evolution of the portfolio is evaluated at clear stage points designed to plot progress towards completion - from 0% (not started) to 100 % (complete). The evaluation refers to the current status of the portfolio and is an evaluation of work to date.

| <i>%</i> | <i>Target Date</i> | <i>Stage</i> |
|----------|--------------------|--|
| 10 | _____ | Draft outline (general) |
| 25 | _____ | Definitive outline (including specific goal(s) intended) |
| 50 | _____ | Detailed 'structure' of portfolio |
| 70 | _____ | Preliminary presentation (incl. peer review) |
| 90 | _____ | Intermediate presentation (incl. peer review) |
| 100 | _____ | Presentation of complete portfolio |