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I verify that my dissertation represents original research and has been conducted with integrity and adherence to ethical research standards. I affirm that all data, findings, and analyses are accurately reported and have not been falsified or plagiarized. All sources of information, whether published, unpublished, or generated through artificial intelligence tools, have been appropriately cited and referenced in accordance with APA guidelines and Grand Canyon University (GCU) policies.

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Abstract

Remove this paragraph once you have completed the abstract and updated the keywords. The abstract must be no more than one manuscript page in length, including the keywords. The abstract must be justified. To accomplish this, go to the home tab and in the paragraph group, click on the ‘justify’ button (circled in red in the image below). This will align the text evenly on both the left and right margins, as demonstrated by this paragraph.  The abstract provides a succinct summary of the study and includes the purpose of the study, research question(s) stated in a narrative format, data sources, data analysis, results including corresponding statistical analysis (such as *F*, *t*, degrees of freedom, and *p* values), and a valid conclusion of the research.

*Keywords*: Add your own keywords here

Dedication

An optional dedication may be included here.

Acknowledgments

An optional acknowledgements page can be included here. Note: site names must not be identified here to ensure confidentiality of the site and participants.

Table of Contents

[List of Tables xiii](#_Toc187735933)

[List of Figures xiv](#_Toc187735934)

[Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study 1](#_Toc187735935)

[Identification of the Problem Space 1](#_Toc187735936)

[Defining the Problem 1](#_Toc187735937)

[Justifying the Problem 1](#_Toc187735938)

[Importance of Studying the Problem 1](#_Toc187735939)

[Core Elements of the Study 2](#_Toc187735940)

[Rationale for Methodology and Design 3](#_Toc187735941)

[Justifying the Qualitative Methodology 3](#_Toc187735942)

[Justifying Selected Design 3](#_Toc187735943)

[Population and Sampling Strategies 3](#_Toc187735944)

[Population and Sample 4](#_Toc187735945)

[Recruitment Plan 4](#_Toc187735946)

[Necessary Documentation 4](#_Toc187735947)

[Definition of Terms 4](#_Toc187735948)

[General Terms 4](#_Toc187735949)

[Summary 5](#_Toc187735950)

[Chapter 2: Literature Review 6](#_Toc187735951)

[Review of the Literature 6](#_Toc187735952)

[Introduction 6](#_Toc187735953)

[Review of Literature Structure 6](#_Toc187735954)

[Topic/Theme 1 6](#_Toc187735955)

[Topic/Theme 2 6](#_Toc187735956)

[Topic/Theme 3 7](#_Toc187735957)

[Summary 7](#_Toc187735958)

[Theoretical Framework 7](#_Toc187735959)

[Name of Theory 1 7](#_Toc187735960)

[Name of Theory 2 7](#_Toc187735961)

[Summary 7](#_Toc187735962)

[Chapter 3: Methodology 9](#_Toc187735963)

[Introduction 9](#_Toc187735964)

[Changes to Initial Plans in Chapter 1 9](#_Toc187735965)

[Sources of Data 10](#_Toc187735966)

[Data Source #1 11](#_Toc187735967)

[Data Source #2 11](#_Toc187735968)

[Data Collection and Management 11](#_Toc187735969)

[Revised Recruitment Process 12](#_Toc187735970)

[Steps to Collect the Data 12](#_Toc187735971)

[Steps to Securely Store the Data 12](#_Toc187735972)

[Data Analysis Procedures 12](#_Toc187735973)

[Data Preparation Plan 13](#_Toc187735974)

[Demographic Information Collected from the Sample 13](#_Toc187735975)

[Data Analysis Approach 13](#_Toc187735976)

[Reflexivity and Positionality 13](#_Toc187735977)

[Assumptions, Delimitations, and Anticipated Limitations 14](#_Toc187735978)

[Assumptions 14](#_Toc187735979)

[Anticipated Limitations 14](#_Toc187735980)

[Delimitations 14](#_Toc187735981)

[Ethical Considerations 14](#_Toc187735982)

[Respect for Persons 15](#_Toc187735983)

[Beneficence 15](#_Toc187735984)

[Justice 15](#_Toc187735985)

[Data Handling 15](#_Toc187735986)

[Summary 15](#_Toc187735987)

[Changes from Original Plan 16](#_Toc187735988)

[Synopsis of Current Plan to Address Research Question(s) 16](#_Toc187735989)

[Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results 17](#_Toc187735990)

[Introduction 17](#_Toc187735991)

[Important Changes and Updates to Information in Chapter 3 17](#_Toc187735992)

[Chapter 4 Overview 17](#_Toc187735993)

[Sample Profile and Descriptive Findings 18](#_Toc187735994)

[Data Preparation 18](#_Toc187735995)

[Demographic Data for the Sample 18](#_Toc187735996)

[Descriptive Data – Data Sources 18](#_Toc187735997)

[Data Analysis Procedures 18](#_Toc187735998)

[Data Analysis Process Step 1 19](#_Toc187735999)

[Data Analysis Process Step 2 19](#_Toc187736000)

[Data Analysis Process Step 3 19](#_Toc187736001)

[Data Analysis Process Step 4 19](#_Toc187736002)

[Summary 20](#_Toc187736003)

[Results 20](#_Toc187736004)

[RQ1 - Theme #1 20](#_Toc187736005)

[RQ1 - Theme #2 20](#_Toc187736006)

[Reassessment of Limitations 21](#_Toc187736007)

[Limitations of Data Sources 21](#_Toc187736008)

[Limitations of Methodology and Design 21](#_Toc187736009)

[Limitations of Sampling Strategy 21](#_Toc187736010)

[Summary 21](#_Toc187736011)

[Chapter 5: Conclusions, Implications, and Reflections on the Research Process 23](#_Toc187736012)

[Summary of Findings and Conclusions 23](#_Toc187736013)

[Introduction 23](#_Toc187736014)

[Summary of Main Results and Findings 23](#_Toc187736015)

[How Findings Informed the Problem Space 23](#_Toc187736016)

[Comparing Results to Prior Studies 23](#_Toc187736017)

[Implications and Recommendations 23](#_Toc187736018)

[Introduction 24](#_Toc187736019)

[Summary of Results and Findings 24](#_Toc187736020)

[Study Strengths, Weaknesses, and Limitations 24](#_Toc187736021)

[Practical Actionable Implications and/or Recommendations 24](#_Toc187736022)

[Future Research Implications and/or Recommendations 24](#_Toc187736023)

[Reflection on the Research Process 24](#_Toc187736024)

[Personal Growth as a Researcher 25](#_Toc187736025)

[Insights Gained Through the Dissertation Journey 25](#_Toc187736026)

[References. 26](#_Toc187736027)

[Appendix A. Site Authorization 27](#_Toc187736028)

[Appendix B. Recruitment Materials 28](#_Toc187736029)

[Appendix C. Informed Consent 29](#_Toc187736030)

[Appendix D. Sources of Data 30](#_Toc187736031)

[Appendix E. IRB Approval Letter 31](#_Toc187736032)

[Appendix F. Transcripts 32](#_Toc187736033)

[Appendix G. Codebook and Data Reduction Tables 33](#_Toc187736034)

# List of Tables

**Table 0.1** *Correct Formatting for a Multiple Line Table Title is Single Spaced and Should Look Like this Example* xiii

**Table 1.1**  *Study Core Elements* 2

**Table G.1** *Sample Codebook* 33

Remove this paragraph and the table below once you no longer need it. To update the List of Tables: [Place cursor on the page number or title 🡪Right click 🡪 Update Field 🡪 Update Entire Table], and the table title and subtitle will show up with the in-text formatting. Below is a sample table:

**Table 0.1**

*Correct Formatting for a Multiple Line Table Title is Single Spaced and Should Look Like this Example*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Participant | Gender | Role | Location |
| Susan | F | Principal | School A |
| Mary | F | Teacher | School A |
| Joseph | M | Principal | School B |
| *Note.* Adapted from: I.M. Researcher (2010). Sampling and Recruitment in Studies of Doctoral Students. *Journal of Perspicuity*, 25, p. 100. Reprinted with permission. |

# List of Figures

**Figure 0.1** *The Relationship of Things* xiv

Remove this paragraph and the figure below once you no longer need it. To update the List of Figures: [Place curser on page number or title 🡪Right click 🡪 Update Field 🡪 Update Entire Table], and the figure title and subtitle will show up with the in-text formatting. Below is a sample figure:

**Figure 0.1**

*The Relationship of Things*



# Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

## Identification of the Problem Space

| **Identification of the Problem Space (Max 4 Pages)** |
| --- |
| Identification of the Problem Space is the foundation for your study, establishing the core issue you are investigating. Here, you will clearly define the problem, explain its significance within the field, and pinpoint the specific information needed to inform a more comprehensive understanding of the problem. You will need to utilize relevant data or scholarly sources to substantiate the problem's importance and lay the groundwork for your research to address this need for additional information.For additional information, please view the corresponding [**companion guide section**](https://dc.gcu.edu/research/qual_companion_guide/chapter_1/problem_space). |
| **Holistic Review** |
| The problem space is defined, with the need for specific information provided to better understand the underlying concern. Relevant data or scholarly sources have been used to substantiate the problem space's importance. The groundwork for justifying the need for the study has been laid. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* |
| **Critical Feasibility/Risk Item** |
| The problem space is defined and justified with relevant data and/or scholarly sources. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score | Consultant Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow*  | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* |
| *Rationale if Critical Feasibility/Risk Item scored as Not Met and actionable feedback the learner can apply to meet this critical feasibility/risk item.* |
|  |

### Defining the Problem

Insert text here.

### Justifying the Problem

Insert text here.

### Importance of Studying the Problem

Insert text here.

## Core Elements of the Study

|  |
| --- |
| **Core Elements of the Study (Max 3 Pages)** |
| In the *Identification of the Problem Space* section, you discussed what needs to be studied and why it needs to be studied. In this section, you will provide a table of the core components demonstrating how you will go about studying that problem. You may include text to help explain, but the focus is on the table. This will also be a good point of return so you can be consistent throughout your document.For additional information, please view the corresponding [**companion guide section**](https://dc.gcu.edu/research/qual_companion_guide/chapter_1/qual_core_elements). |
| **Holistic Review** |
| The study problem statement, purpose statement, phenomenon, sources of data, and research question(s) are aligned with each other, clearly and distinctly articulated, and consistent with the information in Chapter 1. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* |
| **Critical Feasibility/Risk Item** |
| The study problem statement, purpose statement, phenomenon, sources of data, and research question(s) are aligned. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score | Consultant Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow*  | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* |
| *Rationale if Critical Feasibility/Risk Item scored as Not Met and actionable feedback the learner can apply to meet this critical feasibility/risk item.* |
|  |

Insert text here.

**Table 1.1**
*Study Core Elements*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Element | Description |
| Problem Statement |  |
| Purpose Statement |  |
| Research Question(s) |  |
| Phenomenon |  |
| Data Sources |  |
| Analytical Approach |  |

## Rationale for Methodology and Design

|  |
| --- |
| **Rationale for Methodology and Design (Max 2 Pages)** |
| In the *Rationale for Methodology and Design* section, you need to use relevant scholarly sources to briefly defend (a) why the qualitative methodology is appropriate for your study and the quantitative methodology is not and (b) why your chosen design is appropriate.For additional information, please view the corresponding [**companion guide section**](https://dc.gcu.edu/research/qual_companion_guide/chapter_1/methodology). |
| **Holistic Review** |
| Scholarly sources are used to justify the choice of qualitative over quantitative methodology and the choice of the selected qualitative design. Demonstrates the ability of the chosen approach to capture the complexity of the phenomenon under investigation. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* |
|  |

### Justifying the Qualitative Methodology

Insert text here.

### Justifying Selected Design

Insert text here.

## Population and Sampling Strategies

|  |
| --- |
| **Population and Sampling Strategies (Max 3 Pages)** |
| In this section, you need to detail your participant selection process, sampling strategy, and plans for obtaining sufficient participants. This means defining and characterizing the overall population you are interested in. Then, narrow that down to your target population and specify its size to ensure adequate numbers to achieve your sample. For additional information, please view the corresponding [**companion guide section**](https://dc.gcu.edu/research/qual_companion_guide/chapter_1/population). |
| **Holistic Review** |
| The general population and target population are defined with a sufficiently sized target population indicated from which to recruit sufficient participants to meet at least the minimum sample size dictated by the GCU core design document. The sample size is supported by the literature. A primary plan for achieving this sample is indicated with two contingency plans. Address the recruitment site(s) and any permissions that will be required for data collection, including IRB approval. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* |
| **Critical Feasibility/Risk Item** |
| Researcher is likely to obtain the needed site permission(s) to access the target population(s). The target population is justified as being sufficiently large to support successful recruitment of the projected sample size. There are no ethical issues with accessing the target population. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score | Consultant Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* |
| *Rationale if Critical Feasibility/Risk Item scored as Not Met and actionable feedback the learner can apply to meet this critical feasibility/risk item.* |
|  |

### Population and Sample

Insert text here.

### Recruitment Plan

Insert text here.

### Necessary Documentation

Insert text here.

## Definition of Terms

|  |
| --- |
| **Definition of Terms (Max 2 Pages)** |
| Define any words that may be unknown to a layperson (words with unusual or ambiguous meanings or technical terms) from the research or literature, utilizing relevant scholarly sources to support the definitions. For additional information, please view the corresponding [**companion guide section**](https://dc.gcu.edu/research/qual_companion_guide/chapter_1/terms) |
| **Holistic Review** |
| All key concepts found in the core elements are defined with citations. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow*  |
|  |

### General Terms

Insert text here.

## Summary

| **Summary (Max 2 Pages)** |
| --- |
| Succinctly revisit the study’s core elements, encapsulating its significant points to reinforce the foundation. Explain how the proposed plan will be feasible and manageable. Provide a transition to Chapter 2.For additional information, please view the corresponding [**companion guide section**](https://dc.gcu.edu/research/qual_companion_guide/chapter_1/summary). |
| **Holistic Review** |
| The importance of the study is summarized, feasibility is addressed, and a transition to Chapter 2 is provided. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* |
|  |

Insert text here.

# Chapter 2: Literature Review

## Review of the Literature

|  |
| --- |
| **Review of the Literature (Minimum 30 Pages)** |
| Start the literature review by explaining the study's purpose, how you surveyed literature, and how the literature is organized by key themes and trends, moving from broad to more specific findings. Give an overview of what other studies have found on this topic, pointing out the main ideas, trends, and debates. By synthesizing key studies and using argumentation, highlight how the current study fits into the bigger picture and why it’s necessary in today’s research landscape. Wrap up with a transition that smoothly moves from the literature review into the next section on the *Theoretical Framework* of the study.If you plan to use AI tools to support this section, provide full transparency about the tools used and how they were utilized. Review and adhere to GCU’s statements on the ethical and acceptable use of AI to ensure that your approach is transparent, ethical, and aligns with academic standards.For additional information, please view the corresponding [**companion guide section**](https://dc.gcu.edu/research/qual_companion_guide/chapter_2/literature_review). |
| **Holistic Review** |
| The *Review of the Literature* section introduces the central arguments emerging from the literature, addressing why further study of the research topic/problem is necessary and what contributions the study will make to existing literature. The review is organized clearly to address these central arguments, explaining the rationale behind the structure. The section describes the survey of the literature, detailing the search terms and databases used. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | **NA** | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* |
|  |

### Introduction

Insert text here.

### Review of Literature Structure

Insert text here.

### Topic/Theme 1

Insert text here.

### Topic/Theme 2

Insert text here.

### Topic/Theme 3

Insert text here.

### Summary

Insert text here.

## Theoretical Framework

|  |
| --- |
| **Theoretical Framework (Minimum of 3 Pages)** |
| In this section, you will clearly identify and describe the theoretical framework(s) that will guide your research, citing the seminal source for each theory. The phenomenon needs to be tied back into your theory. Using the theoretical framework, explain how it guides your phenomenon and research question(s). If necessary, use more than one theory to comprehensively address the phenomenon and research question(s). If you plan to use AI tools to support this section, provide full transparency about the tools used and how they were utilized. Review and adhere to GCU’s statements on the ethical and acceptable use of AI to ensure that your approach is transparent, ethical, and aligns with academic standards.For additional information, please view the corresponding [**companion guide section**](https://dc.gcu.edu/research/qual_companion_guide/chapter_2/theoretical_foundation_conceptual_framework). |
| **Holistic Review** |
| *Theoretical Framework*, which is based on a comprehensive understating of the relevant literature/research, provides a structured foundation (theories/models/concepts) to analyze a phenomenon based on a problem statement, guides the collection of the data to address the research question(s), and demonstrates how the research can make an impact. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | **NA** | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* |
|  |

### Name of Theory 1

Insert text here.

### Name of Theory 2

Insert text here.

## Summary

|  |
| --- |
| **Summary (Maximum 2 Pages)** |
| Begin the summary with an introductory paragraph that reminds the reader of the research topic you are examining and clearly state the key overarching themes that guided your literature search. Provide a brief summary of the *Theoretical Framework* section. If the problem space, phenomenon, research question(s), etc., have changed due to the literature review, you can inform the reader that there were additional things to consider looking ahead to Chapter 3. You want to end this section by introducing the reader to Chapter 3. For additional information, please view the corresponding [**companion guide section**](https://dc.gcu.edu/research/qual_companion_guide/chapter_2/summary). |
| **Holistic Review** |
| The *Summary* section concisely synthesizes key points from the *Review of the Literature* and *Theoretical Framework* sections and provides a transition to Chapter 3. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | **NA** | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow*  |
|  |

# Chapter 3: Methodology

## Introduction

|  |
| --- |
| **Introduction (Max 2 Pages)** |
| This section should clearly articulate whether the core elements and/or recruitment plan of the study, as presented in Chapter 1, remain unchanged or have been refined. If these elements remain unchanged, provide a rationale, detailing why the insights from the literature review reinforce the initial direction and focus of your study. For any modifications from Chapter 1, succinctly explain how the literature review or additional understanding influenced these changes. If changes are made to the core elements, introduce a new core elements table with the updated core elements. If changes are made to the definitions and/or new definitions are added, introduce these in a subsection of *Revised Definitions* below. Whether changes are made or not to the recruitment plan from Chapter 1, these elements need to be described in detail in the *Data Collection and Management* section of this chapter.For additional information, please view the corresponding [**companion guide section**.](https://dc.gcu.edu/research/qual_companion_guide/chapter_3/introduction) |
| **Holistic Review** |
| Justification for retaining the core elements and recruitment plan initially presented in Ch1 is provided. Where changes have been made, these need to be detailed and explained, potentially needing a new core elements table and/or discussing revised recruitment strategies in the *Data Collection and Management* section. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | **NA** |
| **Critical Feasibility/Risk Item** |
| If applicable, a complete and aligned revised core elements table is provided. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score | Consultant Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | **NA** | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* |
| *Rationale if Critical Feasibility/Risk Item scored as Not Met and actionable feedback the learner can apply to meet this critical feasibility/risk item.* |
|  |

### Changes to Initial Plans in Chapter 1

Insert text here.

Revised Definitions. Insert text here.

## Sources of Data

|  |
| --- |
| **Sources of Data (Max 4 Pages)** |
| In the realm of research, the meticulous collection and analysis of data stand as central element that underpin the integrity and trustworthiness of any study. The section will describe and justify the data to be gathered, explaining the development of the data sources in a clear, chronological, and detailed manner. The importance of this section lies in its role as the foundation upon which the study’s findings are built, ensuring that the data sources are both relevant and robust enough to collect the data needed to address/answer the research question(s) effectively. The *Sources of Data* section is of high importance as it provides a comprehensive overview of the research data and additional data to be collected. It distinguishes between the two by defining research data as data specifically collected to address the research question(s) and additional data such as demographic data which can be collected to help support transferability of the findings or data potentially used for participant selection. Doing so offers clarity and focus to the study, ensuring that each data type serves its intended purpose without overreaching the study’s scope. In the broader context of the chapter, this section aligns with the methodological framework, ensuring that the data collection aligns with the research design and purpose. It offers transparency and sets the stage for the subsequent analysis, which is integral to the study’s trustworthiness.***Note that use of instruments, databases, etc. may require permission.***For additional information, please view the corresponding [**companion guide section**](https://dc.gcu.edu/research/qual_companion_guide/chapter_3/sources_of_data). |
| **Holistic Review** |
| The sources of data align with qualitative methodology and study design and are ideal for producing sufficient data to answer the RQs. The corresponding interview guide(s), questionnaire with relevant demographics, and additional questionnaire(s), if applicable, are provided in the appendix. If the learner used and/or modified another author’s data source, the necessary permissions are in the appendix. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | **NA** |
| **Critical Feasibility/Risk Item** |
| The sources of data should produce sufficient data to answer the RQ(s). The corresponding sources of data are provided in the appendix, including the relevant demographic questionnaire. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score | Consultant Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | **NA** | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* |
| *Rationale if Critical Feasibility/Risk Item scored as Not Met and actionable feedback the learner can apply to meet this critical feasibility/risk item.* |
|  |

### Data Source #1

Insert text here.

### Data Source #2

Insert text here.

## Data Collection and Management

|  |
| --- |
| **Data Collection and Management (Max 4 Pages)** |
| The *Data Collection and Management* section outlines the detailed process for collecting and managing data in the study, which is crucial for ensuring the research’s trustworthiness and ethical integrity. A clear and comprehensive description of the data collection procedures allows future researchers to replicate the study and enhances its trustworthiness. This section serves as a roadmap, providing a step-by-step guide from gaining site approval to preparing the data for analysis. It ensures that every procedural detail is captured, offering a transparent view of how the study will be conducted.The data collection process begins with site authorization and obtaining Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, establishing the study’s ethical framework. Following this, the recruitment of participants is detailed, including how they will be approached and selected. Informed consent procedures are described to ensure participants are fully aware of their involvement and the protection of their rights. The collection of demographic information, if applicable, is also outlined.The section then progresses to scheduling and conducting the first data collection event, such as semi-structured interviews or focus groups. Detailed descriptions of the tools and techniques used for data recording, including backup methods, are provided. Transcription procedures and member-checking processes are explained to ensure the accuracy of the data.Subsequent steps include scheduling and conducting additional data collection events and then preparing the data for analysis. Data management procedures, including confidentiality measures and data security, are woven throughout to protect participant information and maintain data integrity.For additional information, please view the corresponding [**companion guide section**](https://dc.gcu.edu/research/qual_companion_guide/chapter_3/qualitative_data_collection_and_management). |
| **Holistic Review** |
| The study procedures are outlined in detail, covering each step from recruitment through data collection, including data management during and after data collection. The process for obtaining informed consent before data collection, as well as measures to ensure participant anonymity or confidentiality, are also described. Each step of the participant experience in the study is clearly specified, outlining what participants will be asked to complete. The components of trustworthiness are detailed and specific strategies to mitigate risks to trustworthiness are identified. Instruments and/or other sources of data, site authorization, recruitment materials (where applicable), and informed consent documents are provided in the appropriate appendices. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | **NA** |
| **Critical Feasibility/Risk Item** |
| The participant recruitment strategy, informed consent process, data collection and management processes, and strategies to mitigate risks to trustworthiness are clearly identified, enabling potential study replication. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score | Consultant Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | **NA** | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* |
| *Rationale if Critical Feasibility/Risk Item scored as Not Met and actionable feedback the learner can apply to meet this critical feasibility/risk item.* |
|  |

### Revised Recruitment Process

Insert text here.

### Steps to Collect the Data

Insert text here.

### Steps to Securely Store the Data

Insert text here.

## Data Analysis Procedures

|  |
| --- |
| **Data Analysis Procedures (Max 5 Pages)** |
| The *Data Analysis Procedures* section is an extremely important component of the dissertation proposal because it outlines how the researcher will process and interpret the raw data to answer the research question(s). This section builds on the methodology, bridging the data collection process and the results. In this section, the learner will describe, in detail, the analytical procedures and provide a rationale for the chosen approach, ensuring alignment with the research question(s), study design, and data sources.The *Data Analysis Procedures* section is essential because it demonstrates the rigor and thoughtfulness behind the proposed analysis. Clear and detailed explanations of the data analysis process provide transparency, making it easier for others to understand the trustworthiness of the findings. Furthermore, the learner must justify their choice of analytical approach (e.g., thematic analysis, narrative analysis, or content analysis) by showing how it addresses the research question(s) and supports the study's purpose.This section also outlines the step-by-step process of transforming raw data into meaningful themes or insights. Including this clear and methodical description is critical to avoid ambiguity in the researcher's approach and ensure replicability.For additional information, please view the corresponding [**companion guide section**](https://dc.gcu.edu/research/qual_companion_guide/chapter_3/qualitative_data_analysis_procedures).  |
| **Holistic Review** |
| Data analysis procedures clearly indicate how the raw data will be processed, including the chosen analysis approach (inductive, deductive, or hybrid) and its alignment with the study design. The data preparation and coding strategy is detailed and drawn from reputable sources. Relevant methodological considerations are addressed, including researcher positionality, reflexivity practices, and strategies for ensuring trustworthiness. How the results of the qualitative analysis will be interpreted and displayed to answer the RQ(s) is indicated, including the use of any analysis software or tools and their specific applications. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | **NA** |
| **Critical Feasibility/Risk Item** |
| Data preparation is detailed to facilitate data analysis. Methodological considerations of trustworthiness and researcher positionality are addressed. Methods for analyzing the findings are thoroughly discussed and demonstrate clear linkages to the RQ(s). |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score | Consultant Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | **NA** | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* |
| *Rationale if Critical Feasibility/Risk Item scored as Not Met and actionable feedback the learner can apply to meet this critical feasibility/risk item.* |
|  |

### Data Preparation Plan

Insert text here.

### Demographic Information Collected from the Sample

Insert text here.

### Data Analysis Approach

Introduction to the Data Analysis Approach. Insert text here.

Step-by-step Analytical Procedures. Insert text here.

Visual aids. Insert text here.

Triangulation – Criteria and Process (insert only if you are doing a case study; otherwise, delete). Insert text here.

### Reflexivity and Positionality

Insert text here.

## Assumptions, Delimitations, and Anticipated Limitations

|  |
| --- |
| **Assumptions, Delimitations, and Anticipated Limitations (Max 2 Pages)** |
| When doing research, there are things you assume to be true, but cannot verify (assumptions), things that you cannot control but that may interfere with your study (limitations), and things you put into place to enable you to do the study (delimitations). This section is intended for you to identify those things, indicate the effect they might have on your study, and discuss any efforts you will make to help mitigate any negative effect on the trustworthiness of your study. After you do the study, in particular, you may find that additional limitations arose, which will be discussed in Chapter 4.For additional information, please view the corresponding [**companion guide section**](https://dc.gcu.edu/research/qual_companion_guide/chapter_3/assumptions_delimitations_anticipated_limitations).  |
| **Holistic Review** |
| Assumptions, anticipated limitations, and delimitations are defined and identified. Potential effect on the study is indicated as are efforts to mitigate potential risks to transferability. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | **NA** |
|  |

### Assumptions

Insert text here.

### Anticipated Limitations

Insert text here.

### Delimitations

Insert text here.

## Ethical Considerations

|  |
| --- |
| **Ethical Considerations (Max 2 Pages)** |
| While nearly all GCU dissertation research fits in the IRB exempt classification, that does not mean research ethics are not important. You still need to ensure that you are meeting the Belmont Principles of (a) respect for persons, (b) beneficence, and (c) justice, as well as properly handling and storing the data you collect, including maintaining anonymity, confidentiality, and privacy. Discuss specific strategies to avoid coercion and manage conflicts of interest, if applicable. This section is for you to provide assurances that you are meeting the Belmont Principle requirements before you submit to IRB for approval to conduct your research. You will need at least preliminary site approval to access your target population and draft informed consent in the appendices. Please note, per university policy, IRB approval is required for every research study conducted at GCU. Failure to obtain IRB approval for your study will result in a code of conduct violation and may require you to start over with your study.For additional information, please view the corresponding [**companion guide section**](https://dc.gcu.edu/research/qual_companion_guide/chapter_3/ethical_considerations).  |
| **Holistic Review** |
| Discuss how you are meeting the Belmont Principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. Site approvals, informed consents, and corresponding recruitment materials are included in the appendices. Handling and storage of the data are also indicated as well as any potential conflict(s) of interest. Note: before moving to Level 2 review, you must have site approvals in the appendix or discuss why it is not there. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | **NA** |
|  |

### Respect for Persons

Insert text here.

### Beneficence

Insert text here.

### Justice

Insert text here.

### Data Handling

Insert text here.

## Summary

|  |
| --- |
| **Summary (Max 2 Pages)** |
| The purpose of this section is to provide a brief recap of what you will be doing and how you will be doing it. If you changed the initial plan in Chapter 1, that should be incorporated into the Summary. The summary should provide a smooth transition into Chapter 4, where the data collection and analysis results will be discussed.For additional information, please view the corresponding [**companion guide section**](https://dc.gcu.edu/research/qual_companion_guide/chapter_3/summary).  |
| **Holistic Review** |
| Provide a brief summary of the key elements of Chapter 3 in terms of instrumentation and plans for collecting and analyzing the data to answer the research question(s). Also, provide a segue to Chapter 4. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | **NA** |
|  |

### Changes from Original Plan

Insert text here.

### Synopsis of Current Plan to Address Research Question(s)

Insert text here.

# Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results

## Introduction

|  |
| --- |
| **Introduction (Max 2 Pages)** |
| In this section, you clearly articulate whether the core elements, data sources, recruitment plan, and/or data analysis of the study remain unchanged or have been refined from what you presented in Chapter 3. If these elements remain unchanged, explicitly indicate that the proposed plan in Chapter 3 was followed. For any modifications, succinctly explain why those changes occurred. If changes were made to the core elements, introduce a new core elements table with the updated core elements. This section also introduces the remaining sections within Chapter 4.For additional information, please view the corresponding [**companion guide section**](https://dc.gcu.edu/research/qual_companion_guide/chapter_4/introduction).  |
| **Holistic Review** |
| Clarification is provided whether the study components from Chapter 3 – problem statement, purpose statement, research question(s), recruitment plan of the study, sources of data/instrumentation, data collection, and/or data analysis, etc., remain unchanged or have been refined, with any modifications needing detailed explanations, influences, and outcomes. If changes are made, a new core elements table may be required. Additionally, any updates related to data analysis, recruitment, sources, or procedures should all be documented. These changes should be included under *Important Changes and Updates to Information in Chapter 3* sub-heading. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | **NA** |
| **Critical Feasibility/Risk Item** |
| Complete revised core elements table and/or data analysis is included. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score | Consultant Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | **NA** | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* |
| *Rationale if Critical Feasibility/Risk Item scored as Not Met and actionable feedback the learner can apply to meet this critical feasibility/risk item.* |
|  |

### Important Changes and Updates to Information in Chapter 3

Insert text here.

### Chapter 4 Overview

Insert text here.

## Sample Profile and Descriptive Findings

|  |
| --- |
| **Sample Profile and Descriptive Findings (No Maximum Page Count)** |
| This section will present the profile of the sample using your demographic data. In this section, the preparation and description of the data is also presented in terms of durations, number of transcribed pages, and other relevant information about the data.For additional information, please view the corresponding [**companion guide section**](https://dc.gcu.edu/research/qual_companion_guide/chapter_4/sample_profile_and_descriptive_findings).  |
| **Holistic Review** |
| The quantity of data collected are described in terms of durations and transcribed pages; any incomplete data sources are recognized and explained. How the data were prepared for analysis is described fully. The demographic descriptions of the sample are presented clearly. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | **NA** |
| **Critical Feasibility/Risk Item** |
| The amount of data collected meets the minimum required durations. All data are described clearly. The demographic qualities of the sample are clearly presented. All data preparations processes are described clearly. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score | Consultant Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | **NA** | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* |
| *Rationale if Critical Feasibility/Risk Item scored as Not Met and actionable feedback the learner can apply to meet this critical feasibility/risk item.* |
|  |

### Data Preparation

Insert text here.

### Demographic Data for the Sample

Insert text here.

### Descriptive Data – Data Sources

Insert text here.

## Data Analysis Procedures

|  |
| --- |
| **Data Analysis Procedures (No Maximum Page Count)** |
| This section presents the actual steps taken to analyze the data with examples from the data. The section needs to have one, clear, chronological, and detailed narrative which presents to the reader exactly how the data analysis process happened; presents visuals to aid in the discussion of the data analysis process.For additional information, please view the corresponding [**companion guide section**](https://dc.gcu.edu/research/qual_companion_guide/chapter_4/data_analysis_procedures).  |
| **Holistic Review** |
| The process used for data analysis is presented clearly with appropriate examples demonstrating the logic used to move through the chosen data analysis process. Steps in the data analysis process are presented using tables and narratives for clarity. Narratives and tables are aligned to the chosen data analysis process. The end result of the data analysis process is presented as clear answers to the research question(s). |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | **NA** |
| **Critical Feasibility/Risk Item** |
| Correct descriptions of the demographic qualities of the sample are presented. Correct descriptions of the amount of data collected are presented. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score | Consultant Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | **NA** | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* |
| *Rationale if Critical Feasibility/Risk Item scored as Not Met and actionable feedback the learner can apply to meet this critical feasibility/risk item.* |
|  |

### Data Analysis Process Step 1

Insert text here.

### Data Analysis Process Step 2

Insert text here.

### Data Analysis Process Step 3

Insert text here.

### Data Analysis Process Step 4

Insert text here.

### Summary

Insert text here.

## Results

|  |
| --- |
| **Results (No Maximum Page Count)** |
| This section presents the end result of your data analysis process as answers to the research question(s). Each research question should be clearly answered. Once you have answered the research question, you will need to substantialize your answer using synthesis of examples from the data.For additional information, please view the corresponding [**companion guide section**](https://dc.gcu.edu/research/qual_companion_guide/chapter_4/results).  |
| **Holistic Review** |
| The *Results* section builds upon the end result of the previous section (*Data Analysis Procedures*): answers to the research question(s). Answers to the research question(s) become results through further contextualization, explanation, use of examples from the data, and most importantly the researcher’s synthesis to substantiate the appropriateness of the answers to the research question(s).The synthesis presented should substantiate the results in a convincing manner. Please note: the researcher should not be engaging the literature at this point in time.  |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | **NA** |
| **Critical Feasibility/Risk Item** |
| The answers to the research question(s) (aka results) are substantiated using examples from the data coupled with synthesis presented by the researcher. The section is written in a convincing manner which demonstrates the veracity of the answers to the research question(s). |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score | Consultant Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | **NA** | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* |
| *Rationale if Critical Feasibility/Risk Item scored as Not Met and actionable feedback the learner can apply to meet this critical feasibility/risk item.* |
|  |

### RQ1 - Theme #1

Insert text here.

### RQ1 - Theme #2

Insert text here.

## Reassessment of Limitations

|  |
| --- |
| **Reassessment of Limitations (Max 2 Pages)** |
| In this section, present and discuss the actual limitations you encountered during the study. The presentation should include a reassessment of the anticipated limitations you discussed in Chapter 3, and any new limitations which emerged during the research process. Discuss limitations regarding data sources, methodology and design, and sampling strategies.For additional information, please view the corresponding [**companion guide section**](https://dc.gcu.edu/research/qual_companion_guide/chapter_4/reassessment_of_limitations).  |
| **Holistic Review** |
| The *Reassessment of Limitations* section presented and discussed the actual limitations encountered during the study. A comparison of anticipated limitations from Chapter 3, with any new limitations that emerged, is provided. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | **NA** |
|  |

### Limitations of Data Sources

Insert text here.

### Limitations of Methodology and Design

Insert text here.

### Limitations of Sampling Strategy

Insert text here.

## Summary

|  |
| --- |
| **Summary (Max 1 Page)** |
| In this section, succinctly revisit the key findings, summarizing data collection and analysis results. Recap the limitations you found and their impact on the findings, including transferability. The section concludes with a transition to Chapter 5, where you will explore conclusions, implications, and recommendations based on the findings.For additional information, please view the corresponding [**companion guide section**](https://dc.gcu.edu/research/qual_companion_guide/chapter_4/summary).  |
| **Holistic Review** |
| Provide a summary of the key elements of Chapter 4 in terms of data collection and analysis results, and how limitations might impact their transferability to broader audiences. A transition into Chapter 5 is provided. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | **NA** |
|  |

Insert text here.

# Chapter 5: Conclusions, Implications, and Reflections on the Research Process

## Summary of Findings and Conclusions

|  |
| --- |
| **Summary of Findings and Conclusions (Max 7 Pages)** |
| The *Summary of Findings and Conclusions* section provides an opportunity for you to synthesize the results from your research and interpret the findings by comparing them to results and findings from prior and current research. This section also provides a summary of the main results and findings from your study from Chapter 4, highlighting the most significant or unexpected discoveries. Finally, discuss how your study informed the problem space you established in Chapter 1. For additional information, please view the corresponding [**companion guide section**](https://dc.gcu.edu/research/qual_companion_guide/chapter_5/summary_of_findings_and_conclusions).  |
| **Holistic Review** |
| In the *Summary of Findings and Conclusions* section, research findings are synthesized, addressing the problem space from Chapter 1. The main results and significant discoveries are organized by research question(s). Findings in relation to existing literature are interpreted, demonstrating contributions to knowledge and maintaining relevance to research parameters from the prior chapters. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | **NA** | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* |
|  |

### Introduction

Insert text here.

### Summary of Main Results and Findings

Insert text here.

### How Findings Informed the Problem Space

Insert text here.

### Comparing Results to Prior Studies

Insert text here.

## Implications and Recommendations

|  |
| --- |
| **Implications and Recommendations (Max 10 Pages)** |
| In this section, you will recap your main findings in a clear way that reminds readers of what you discovered. Next, you will want to be honest about what your study did well and where it had limitations, since this information helps readers understand how much they can rely on your results. Based on your findings, explain how your research could be used in the real world, such as how key stakeholders might apply what you learned. Share specific recommendations for putting your findings into practice, making sure to explain why each suggestion makes sense based on your results. Finally, suggest what future research could explore, pointing out any questions your study raised or areas that need more investigation.For additional information, please view the corresponding [**companion guide section**](https://dc.gcu.edu/research/qual_companion_guide/chapter_5/implications_and_recommendations).  |
| **Holistic Review** |
| The study results from Chapter 4 are summarized to provide a comprehensive discussion of the implications and recommendations. Considering the strengths, weaknesses, and limitations, findings are connected to broader contexts and future research opportunities, describing possible applications of the results in the real world. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | **NA** | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* |
|  |

### Introduction

Insert text here.

### Summary of Results and Findings

Insert text here.

### Study Strengths, Weaknesses, and Limitations

Insert text here.

### Practical Actionable Implications and/or Recommendations

Insert text here.

### Future Research Implications and/or Recommendations

Insert text here.

## Reflection on the Research Process

|  |
| --- |
| **Reflection on the Research Process (Max 3 Pages)** |
| In this section, you will reflect on your personal growth, challenges, and insights gained as you have learned about research. Discuss how you have learned to approach problems more systematically and analytically. Provide a reflection on the skills and knowledge you have acquired or leveraged when conducting research. Finally, reflect on the most significant developmental challenges you faced during the research process, how you overcame these obstacles, and what you learned from them, including a discussion on how these lessons might shape your future endeavors.For additional information, please view the corresponding [**companion guide section**](https://dc.gcu.edu/research/qual_companion_guide/chapter_5/reflection_on_the_research_process).  |
| **Holistic Review** |
| A detailed reflection is provided on personal growth, challenges, and insights gained throughout the research process. The skills and knowledge acquired or utilized during research are discussed, including how the approach to problem-solving has changed. Significant developmental challenges are reflected upon, including how they were addressed, and the lessons learned from overcoming them. |
| Learner’s Self-Score | Chair Score | Methodologist Score | Content Expert Score |
| *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* | **NA** | *Select Assessment via Drop Down Arrow* |
|  |

### Personal Growth as a Researcher

Insert text here.

### Insights Gained Through the Dissertation Journey

Insert text here.

# References.

Remove this paragraph once you have started adding your references. Update this section with your references. See <https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/references> for additional information. For referencing journal articles, see <https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/references/examples/journal-article-references>

# Appendix A.Site Authorization

Remove this entire paragraph once you have put in site authorization(s) or addressed why no site authorization is provided. You must have either a conditional or formal site authorization letter for Level 2 Proposal Review. The formal site authorization letter is required for Level 4 IRB Review and Level 5 Dissertation Review. Site authorizations are only good for one year. If no site authorization is required, state that it is not required with an explanation regarding why no site authorization is needed (this is not common and only if you are using your own personal contacts). If using archived data, please add the Data Use Agreement here. If using a third-party contractor, please add your contract information here. For additional information regarding site authorization and to review a sample site authorization letter template, please refer to the Site Authorization page of GCU’s IRB Research Center on the DC Network. Guidelines for site authorization and associated templates can be found here: <https://dc.gcu.edu/documents/irb_documents__iris/site-authorization-to-conduct-research-procedure-and-letter-template>

Insert conditional or formal site authorization letter(s) here.

# Appendix B.Recruitment Materials

Remove this entire paragraph once you have completed the below. In this appendix, include a copy of each recruitment document. Potential recruitment documents could be an email that is distributed, a flyer that was posted on social media, the message you ask your snowball sampling seeds to distribute, etc. However, not all studies use recruitment documents. For example, if you are purchasing an audience, you will not have any recruitment materials as the company would be recruiting your sample on your behalf. If you do not have any recruitment materials, make a clear statement indicating you do not have any recruitment materials and a corresponding explanation regarding why you do not have any recruitment materials. For additional information on recruitment materials, please see <https://dc.gcu.edu/research/irb/prepare/2>.

Insert recruitment material here or indicate why you do not have any recruitment materials.

# Appendix C.Informed Consent

Remove this entire paragraph once you have completed the below. In this appendix, include a copy of your informed consent. For the proposal, include the proposed informed consent form that you will submit to IRB, based on the most up-to-date informed consent document on the GCU IRB website. For the dissertation, include the IRB stamped informed consent document. Not all studies use informed consent. For example, if you are only using an archival dataset, you will not have an informed consent form as you are not obtaining primary data from participants. If you do not need an informed consent, make a clear statement indicating you do not need an informed consent and provide a corresponding explanation regarding why. For additional information on informed consent, please see <https://dc.gcu.edu/research/irb/prepare/3>.

For your proposal, insert your proposed informed consent form here or indicate why you do not need an informed consent form.

For your dissertation, insert images of your stamped IRB approved informed consent, blacking out your personal contact information before uploading that image. If you do not have informed consent, you can delete this paragraph provided you keep the explanation regarding why you do not need informed consent above.

# Appendix D.Sources of Data

Remove this entire paragraph once you have completed the below. In this appendix, include copies of all sources of research data identified in Chapter 3.

Insert sources of research data here.

Include a copy of the demographic questionnaire as an additional data source.

# Appendix E.IRB Approval Letter

Remove this entire paragraph once you have completed the below. In this appendix, include a copy of your signed IRB approval letter. You will obtain this after you receive IRB approval.

For your dissertation, insert images of your IRB Approval Letter here.

# Appendix F.Transcripts

Delete this entire paragraph once you have completed the information in this paragraph. Upload the following data into the 07 folder that we’ve created in your LDP: (a) all transcripts and video recordings, (b) examples of analyses, (c) output from qualitative software programs if applicable, (d) any other pertinent raw data. In this appendix, provide no more than two to three pages total of redacted transcript(s) to protect the confidentiality of your participants.

Insert no more than two to three pages total of redacted transcript(s) here.

# Appendix G.Codebook and Data Reduction Tables

Delete this entire paragraph once you have completed the information in this paragraph. In this appendix, include your codebook and data reduction tables. **This is a required appendix.** There are many ways to construct a Codebook in qualitative research, and learners can draw from those approaches by citing the relevant research authorities. The most minimal approach, however, should still produce a table of **all codes** generated from the analysis regardless of their cycle, along with “definitions” for each code. A “definition” entails the interpretive meaning that made a particular code necessary in the mind of the learner and might offer clues on the situational context tied to that meaning. Because the focus is on the codes exclusively, it does not entail the listing of higher categories or themes, or the tracing of codes to those themes (which is really what should be discussed and illustrated in Chapter 4-*Data Analysis Procedures* and Chapter 4-*Results*).

**Table G.1**

*Sample Codebook*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Code | Coding Cycle | Definition of Code |
| Name the code | xx | Define sufficiently so someone else could follow directions and code your data |
| xx | xx | xx |
| xx | xx | xx |
| Etc. |  |  |