

Workshop on the MFOM dissertation for assessors

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Why a dissertation?

- 2 population-based specialties, both require a dissertation
 - Occupational Medicine (c 50% by MSc)
 - Public Health (100% by MSc)
- Advisory role to employers
 - Workplaces vary greatly, some are unique
 - Little top-down guidance cf DH, NICE

Examples of specialist advice

- Review an employer's pre-employment screening process and make evidence-based recommendations for revisions
- Investigate an outbreak of unexplained symptoms in one department of an industrial plant
- Write and implement a pandemic 'flu policy for a workplace, taking account of national guidelines
- Undertake a risk assessment of a new lifting and handling procedure, draft guidance, audit the outcomes of the controls, and report to management
- Review the cost-effectiveness of an in-house counselling service and make recommendations about continuance

Why a dissertation?

- Formulate a clear question
- Find and appraise the evidence
- Present information clearly
- Interpret information, place it in context, make policy recommendations
- Write clearly, succinctly, and logically
- Sustain the motivation to run a longterm project over several months or years from concept to conclusion
- Team-working, networking

NOT (necessarily) research

- Candidates may submit a substantial audit or systematic review
- No requirement to cover all (or indeed, any) of the curriculum research competencies (because these can be covered elsewhere in the 4 years of training)