# MA in Educational Leadership (Teach First)

**Improving Urban Schools Module Assignment**

***Please read the information about assignments on pages 11-17 of The Handbook for Graduate Students: Taught Masters Courses. This is available at:***

[***http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/wie/teaching/masters/graduate\_studies\_handbook\_12-13.pdf***](http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/wie/teaching/masters/graduate_studies_handbook_12-13.pdf)

*Pay special attention to the Marking Criteria set out on pages 15-17. The information below is designed to supplement, not supersede, the handbook.*

*You may also want to consult the WiE website on Reading and Writing for Academic Purposes located at:* [*http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/wie/teaching/masters/writing*](http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/wie/teaching/masters/writing)

*Suggested Structure of the Assignment*

**Title Page**

Choose a title that accurately reflects your specific paper. Anonymize the school. No more than two lines, if possible.

**Table of Contents**

List the various subsections of the assignment with page numbers. Don’t forget the Reference List and your appendices. Give each appendix a separate title.

**Introduction** (500-750 words)

State the purpose of the study. Give some details about the school and your own position within it. Remember to give the school a suitable pseudonym and tell the reader you have done this. Try to link the local context to national policy and/or current debates in the literature. Set out your research questions clearly (perhaps as a bulleted list).

**Literature Review** (1,500 words)

A *critical* review of *relevant* literature. Draw upon conceptual papers (usually books or book chapters) as well as empirical studies (reported in journal articles). Make clear how relevant you deem each source to be, given your particular context. Use material from the last century (!) if it is seminal (widely-cited) but make sure you have some more recent papers, too (within the last three years). Aim for around 20 sources. Write thematically, not author-by-author, and present a range of alternative perspectives. Indicate where authors disagree, and explain why this might be so. Explicitly link your reading to the research questions listed in the introduction. (You can do this very effectively by using your research questions as subheadings in the literature review). Use some direct quotation (with exact pages numbers) but remember that paraphrasing demonstrates more clearly that you have understood the material being cited. Acknowledge all your references to avoid plagiarism.

End with a summary of the main points, and show how this information has helped to shape your research questions.

**Methodology** (750-1,000 words)

Explain that you are using a case study approach. Clearly indicate what data you collected, from whom, and how. *Justify* these research design choices by citing relevant literature. You have to convince your reader that your particular research design was *the best way* to elicit data with which to answer your research questions – not just the most convenient! Put a copy of all the data collection instruments in the appendices and briefly refer to them in the main body of the assignment. Discuss the trustworthiness of your data (with reference to reliability, validity and triangulation). Explain the specific steps you took to ensure your research was as ethical as possible. Reflect on what you might do differently next time.

**Presentation and Analysis of the Case Study Findings** (1,500 words)

*Present/Describe* the information you elicited. In light of the literature previously cited, *interpret/analyze* what this information means. Compare the data provided by different groups and by different individuals. For example, did the students’ opinions match the teachers’ opinions? And did teacher X agree with teacher Y? Look for nuance and finely-grained distinctions, rather than black-and-white contradictions. As well as comparing your data from different sources, you need to compare your findings with the literature previously cited. To what extent does your case study endorse or undermine the claims of previous research? A powerful technique, here, is to compare and contrast your raw data (verbatim interview quotes or open questionnaire responses) with direct quotes from the literature. Any literature you cite here should have been previously discussed in the literature review. Finally, be sure to explicitly address each of your research questions, perhaps by using them as subheadings in this section.

**Conclusions and recommendations** (500 words)

Summarize your findings, and draw conclusions that are well-grounded in the evidence presented in the analysis section. Where appropriate, make recommendations for future action. Make these as specific as possible, by clearly identifying who would need to do what by when. Briefly discuss how realistic each recommendation is, and put them in an order of priority.

**References**

List all the sources you have cited, but no others. Arrange these alphabetically, and if the same author has written more than one source, arrange their work chronologically beginning with the earliest. Follow the Harvard system detailed on pages 22-24 of *The Handbook for Graduate Students: Taught Masters Courses,* available at:

<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/wie/teaching/masters/graduate_studies_handbook_12-13.pdf>

**Appendices**

Include your data collection instruments here. If you include information about your school (such as an organisational chart, or scheme of work, be sure to remove any real names and any identifying logos – Tippex works well on hard copies).

**Length**

The assignment should be approximately 5,000 words, exclusive of references, necessary tables and appendices. Please note that work which exceeds the word limit by more than 10% or is more than 10% short will be subject to a 5% penalty when it is marked.

**Electronic Submission**

All assignments must be submitted online following the procedures outlined on the following website: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/wie/teaching/masters/esubmission/>

Scroll down the module list until you get to IED93 – Teach First - Improving Urban Schools.

**The assignment is due on Tuesday 7 May 2013 by midnight**