

Answers to practical exercises

Chapter 14: Dissertations

Page 327: Formulating research questions

Imagine that the following statements have been made by students about their dissertation topics. How could they be reformulated as research questions?

Remember that the aim of a dissertation is to present your research findings in a way that answers a question. Without this focus, there is a risk that you will be too descriptive in your approach. If you ask a question, you can make sure that your conclusion is effective by ensuring that it answers the question that you posed.

1. I want to look at the spread of CCTV and relate that to the right of privacy.

- Does the use of CCTV infringe an individual's right to privacy?
- Is the right of privacy eroded by the ever increasing use of CCTV?
- Should the use of CCTV be limited in the interests of privacy?

2. I'm interested in the changes that were made in the law concerning the defendant's right to silence and how this impacts on his right to a fair trial.

- Is the qualified right to silence incompatible with the right to a fair trial?
- Is the right to silence an essential ingredient of a fair trial?
- How has the modification of the right to silence impacted on the defendant's right to a fair trial?

3. My dissertation is about sexual infidelity and the defence of loss of control that came in with the Coroners and Justice Act 2009.

- What was the rationale for the exclusion of sexual infidelity as a trigger for the defence of loss of control and is this situation justifiable?
- How have the courts approached the issue of sexual infidelity when considering loss of control as a defence to murder?
- Should those who kill as a result of sexual infidelity be denied a defence of loss of control?