

How to write a dissertation: abstract

[Education](#)



Writing an abstract for your paper or dissertation can seem daunting. There's so much to cram into such a short space, for example. However, with a little practice and the help of this guide, writing your abstract will be easy peasy! Just read through our handy hints, and have a go...

What is an Abstract?

Before you get started on writing the perfect abstract, it helps to know what one is!

Overall, an abstract is a summary of the following paper, essay or dissertation, and is generally short (one or two paragraphs).

It both explains what your research is about and (if well executed) makes the reader want to find out more.

Be aware that the precise requirements for abstracts is likely to vary from subject to subject

Your abstract should be clear and concise, and also written in simple language

Write your abstract when you have finished your paper.

Your abstract might also offer help to the reader, to allow him or her to decide whether to read the full paper. As such, it might also contain important keywords essential to the topic.

A typical abstract might be 200 words long, but this is likely to vary depending upon your department and the length and purpose of your essay or paper

What to Include in an Abstract

A statement of the problem you are investigating, and why it is important. You need to make the reader understand why he or she should care about the issue, and also give a picture of the gap the research fills.

A statement of the methods you used to get your results. What is your methodology, procedure of investigation, or approach to the problem. It should also cover the results: what you found out, what was learned or made.

Finally, you should mention your conclusions, or the implications of your research. What does this mean for the academic area, for other people

The above can be summarised as (source: University of Plymouth 2013):

ELEMENTS OF YOUR ABSTRACT

What you set out to do, and why

How you did it

What you found

Your conclusions and recommendations

You might also include keywords in your abstract

How to Write, and not to Write an Abstract

Remember the abstract is not an introduction. The introduction sets the stage for the following essay or paper. An abstract summarises the whole. It is not good practice to copy all or part of the introduction for your abstract. Don't use extracts from your essay or dissertation as a short-cut way to produce your abstract. It should be a stand-alone piece of writing.

<https://assignbuster.com/how-to-write-a-dissertation-abstract/>

Write your abstract after you have finished the paper.

Use the common elements outlined above as a way of working out what to include.

The following links to a useful worksheet which will help you write your abstract if you're stuck:

http://www.brookes.ac.uk/services/upgrade/pdf/abstract_worksheet.pdf

Want to Know More?

The following links to a fairly detailed guide on writing abstracts for publication. It's offered by Emerald, one of the larger publishers and providers of academic databases:

<http://www.emeraldinsight.com/authors/guides/write/abstracts.htm?part=1#2>

Bibliography

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