

Structuring an Abstract

An abstract summarises the whole paper and offers an overview of what was done and what was found. Abstracts give the reader an overall idea of your research and the ideas you will be exploring. Since your abstract will be the first thing your readers see, take time with it!

It can be intimidating to condense a large thesis into a concise abstract but knowing the structure of an abstract can help you to approach this part of your thesis confidently.

The structure of an abstract

- Background
- Purpose, aims
- Methods
- Results/Findings
- Conclusion
- Implication



Reading many abstracts from your field can help you get a sense of the structure you need to use for your abstract

1. Topic and Background

Introduce the broad topic and provide the context needed to understand your study. Move from the general topic to the specific issue being investigated.

- What is the broad topic?
- What specific issue does your study address?

3. Methods and Findings

Summarise what you did and what you found.

- What were your research aims or questions?
- How was the data collected?
- What were the key findings?

2. Research Gap

Situate your research within existing literature by identifying what is missing and how your study responds to that gap.

- What gap exists in current research?
- How does your study address this gap?

4. Thesis and Implications

Present your main argument and explain its significance.

- What is your main argument?
- Why does this research matter?
- What are the implications for your field or beyond?