

# Instructions

## Headings of an Academic Paper

The following structure lists all the necessary details of a research paper. You are only required to use the following headings:

- Abstract (first page, not part of the paper)
- Introduction
- Method
- Results
- Discussion
- Conclusion

## Structure of an Academic Paper

### 1. Abstract

### 2. Introduction

- 2.1. Background statement
  - 2.1.1. Contextualisation
  - 2.1.2. Rationale
  - 2.1.3. Background research and keywords
- 2.2. Thesis statement
  - 2.2.1. Aim and purpose
  - 2.2.2. Delimitation
  - 2.2.3. Research question and thesis statement
- 2.3. Outline

### 3. Method

- 3.1. Name your method and explain:
  - 3.1.1. How did you search for information?
  - 3.1.2. Why is your information reliable and valid?
  - 3.1.3. How will you use and analyse the information you have collected?

### 4. Results

- 4.1. Present the data you have collected as the answer to your research question
  - 4.1.1. Introductory contextualisation for understanding the results
  - 4.1.2. Summary of your key findings arranged in a logical sequence
  - 4.1.3. Systematic description of your results
  - 4.1.4. Details, such as figures, charts, photos, maps, tables, etc.

### 5. Discussion

- 5.1. Explanation of results, with comments
- 5.2. Interpretation – what do the results mean?
- 5.3. Deduction, generalisation and recommendations
- 5.4. Conclusion – the answer to your research question. Was your thesis statement correct?

# Content of an Academic Paper

## Abstract

Summarise in one paragraph the major aspects of the entire paper: overall purpose, research question, method, key findings or trends found in your analysis and your interpretations and conclusions.

This is a complete summary of your paper.

## Introduction

Lead the reader from a general topic to your specific field and research question. Set the context of the paper by summarising the current situation. State the purpose of the paper with a hypothesis, research question, or thesis statement, and by explaining your rationale.

Give background information that the reader needs to understand your research question or thesis statement and explain how this information led to your question. Also describe the structure of the paper.

This section explains what the topic of your paper is, and why it should be read. It is often written in present and future tense.

## Method

Provide information about your paper's validity. Validity means how correctly your findings and conclusions will actually illustrate the real world. How do you know that your conclusion is correct?

This section answers two main questions: "How was the data collected?" and "How was it analysed?" The writing should be direct and precise. This section is written in the past tense.

## Results

Report the findings and the information gathered using your method. The results section should simply state the findings, without bias or interpretation, arranged in a logical sequence.

The results section is written in the past tense.

## Discussion

Describe and interpret how well your findings explain how your results can answer the research question. Explain any new understanding or insights about the background you described in the introduction. Connect to the introduction, but do not simply repeat or rearrange the introduction; explain how the new findings create new knowledge.

This section is usually a mix of tenses, as you sometimes look back at the results, and sometimes look ahead in time.

## Conclusion

The conclusion is the last paragraph of the discussion. Explain why your research matters. Restate your thesis statement as a factual statement, but a conclusion is not merely a summary of your points or a re-statement of your thesis statement, it is also a synthesis of key points.

The conclusion is mostly written in present tense, but other simple tenses are also used.