

## Preparing a Dissertation

### Constructing your dissertation

A dissertation or thesis is the most crucial task of a student's life. It is a long academic research paper following previous original research or building new research. Students have to submit it as a final task of their undergraduate or postgraduate degree program.

The structure of a dissertation remains similar in various scenarios. It also depends on your educational discipline. However, the standard structure consists of an introduction, conclusion, etc. It has around five parts.

Thus, the standard structure contains:

- An introduction
- A literature review
- A methodology
- A research results section
- A discussion section
- A conclusion

Every discipline has a different style of writing a dissertation. For example, humanities dissertations are more like an enormous essays. You have to build an argument by investigating various sources. Therefore, you may organize your sections differently in different disciplines of education.

Besides, there are several other crucial components that take place in a dissertation, like a title page, reference list, and abstract. If you have doubts about the structure, check your institute's guidelines. Also, you can ask your supervisor about it. Anyway, to ease things for you, here is a step-by-step guide to writing an excellent dissertation.

### Title page

Before writing anything, there comes a title page. It is the first page of a dissertation that consists of necessary details about your project. A title page usually has a project's title, educational department, school, degree program, your name, and the submission date. Also, you may need to put your registration number and your instructor's name in it, according to your school's criteria. Remember, nearly every school has a strict policy for structuring title pages appropriately.

Moreover, the title page portrays the role of cover if you want to print and bind your dissertation.

## **Acknowledgments**

This section is not compulsory. The purpose of the acknowledgments section is to give credits to everyone who assisted you with your research. Therefore, it is an optional section. However, if you want to proceed with this, you can thank your supervisors, participants, and friends or family who helped you.

## **Abstract**

The abstract is the most vital thing in your dissertation. You should make it once you gather all the essential information. It takes place at the beginning of your dissertation and is around 300 words long summary. Therefore, you need to write it at the end of your research process. However, remember to ensure some factors in the abstract like:

- Affirm the aims and the core topic
- Explain the methods you used
- Summarize results efficiently
- Write your conclusions

The abstract is very short in length. However, it is the first part that the readers will go through in your dissertation. Thus, do not compromise at abstract at any cost. If you cannot compose a brilliant abstract, seek help from professionals or use guides.

## **Table of Contents**

The table of contents section lists everything, including the sections, subheadings, and page numbers. It gives the reader a general idea of your dissertation and eases the navigation process.

You need to put every necessary detail in the table of contents, as well as the appendices. There is a feature of a table of contents in MS Word which can help you make it conveniently.

## **Figures and Tables List**

If your dissertation contains a lot of figures and tables, it is better to optimize them in a list. Luckily, you can easily create a list using a built-in MS Word feature, "the Insert Caption."

## **Abbreviations List**

If you use a lot of short forms in your research paper, you can make an abbreviations section. Thus, it can provide ease to the readers in understanding their meanings.

## Introduction

The introduction section can explain to the readers what they will get from your dissertation. You need to organize the dissertation's topic, resolution, and significance. This section should:

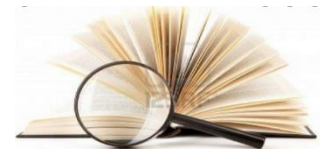


- Provide essential background information to help the readers understand your work
- Describe the horizon of the research
- Argue existing research on your topic, presenting your work's significance extensively
- Express your goals and research questions, and point to how your answers will meet them
- Provide an outline of your research's structure

The introduction section must be excellent. Therefore, you need to make it engaging and appropriate according to your research. It should answer what, why, and how questions of your readers. Also, if you are not sure how to write a brilliant introduction, you can seek help from professionals or use guides to write it.

## Literature Review

Literature review comes before the start of the research process. You should perform a literature review to get an in-depth knowledge of the previous researches that already exists. This process includes:



**Literature Review**

- Gathering relevant resources such as journal articles and books
- Precisely assessing and examining each resource
- Making links amongst them, such as patterns, gaps, conflicts, and more.

Moreover, instead of summarizing existing studies, you have to develop a reasonable argument that justifies your research in the literature review. This section's purpose is to show how your work:

- Fill out the research gaps
- Carries a new methodology to the topic
- Offers a key to a puzzling theory
- Fabricates and strengthens existing knowledge with the latest information

The literature is indirectly the foundation for a conceptual outline. Here, you need to explain and examine the crucial concepts and patterns that set up your research. Also, you can answer informative research questions regarding the link between theories.

## Methodology

This section explains how you performed your research. It lets the readers evaluate its validity. Besides, the methodology should normally contain:

- The genre of research like qualitative, quantitative, or experimental.
- Collection of data
- Evidence of where, when, and with whom you proceed the research
- Your ways of examining data, such as statistical analysis, etc.
- Equipment and resources you utilized
- Details about constraints and hurdles you faced performing the research and ways you tackled them
- Validation of your measures



This section has to convince the readers that your approach has all the answers to your research questions. The methodology tells the readers about things you did to perform your research and how you did them, allowing readers to assess the trustworthiness and accuracy.

## Results

In the results section, you convey the outcomes and findings of your research. However, make sure to only present the relevant results according to your research questions and goals. Also, the results and discussions sections are merged together in some particular topics.



You can also incorporate tables, charts, and graphs in the results section. There is no restriction on presenting your data. However, make sure you are providing relevant findings. Tables and figures offer additional evidence and beneficial visual results which can make your research worthwhile.

## Discussion

This section should mention previous academic work to prove how your methods and results fit well with them. Also, you can offer recommendations for future use. This way, the next researcher will be able to conduct better research. It also makes your work more authentic.



## Conclusion

The research conclusion should briefly respond to the core research question. It should provide the readers with a crystal clear understanding of your point of view. Tell the readers about what you did and how you did it in the dissertation conclusion section. Wrap up your dissertation with a final reflection on what you did and how you did it. Also, you can provide recommendations for further research and practices.



## Reference List

A reference list contains all details of the resources that you have mentioned. Remember, it is necessary to obey a reliable reference style. There are different styles available, and each one possesses a specific format to present resources in the reference list. You can ask your supervisor to suggest you a suitable one.



## Finally

Now you have learned how to write a brilliant dissertation. The above step-by-step guide can help you secure a good grade in your research project. These are the standard ways of how you should write a dissertation. However, the structure may vary according to your discipline and school's criteria. Thus, it is always better to consult your supervisor to prevent problems.

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