

Reading and Writing for the Literature Review

by Dr Margaret Taplin

Aim

The aim of this workshop is to introduce graduate students to some strategies for making and organizing notes while reading for the literature review, and using them as a basis for developing a plan for a structured, logical review.

Content

One of the most challenging tasks in writing a thesis or research article is to organize the ideas from the literature in your field and then structure it in a logical and coherent way. In this workshop we will identify the main features of a literature review and examine some good and not-so-good examples.

We will do some hands-on activities to develop and practice some strategies for:

- collecting and organising your notes from your reading
- using these notes to form a structure for your literature review
- writing a cohesive literature review.

The focus will be mostly on the thematic literature review, although the strategies are relevant for all types.

Organization

This workshop is designed to take about 3 hours to introduce some key strategies and offer some hands-on activities to explore these strategies in a practical context. A PowerPoint and lecture will be uploaded to Moodle for participants to use in their own time. This will be available from June 2nd, 2021. Opportunities will be set up to enable participants to upload ideas to share with each other, and to get feedback from the facilitator if required.

Enrolment

Each workshop is limited to a maximum of 50 students. While it will target the needs of non-native English speaking students, it will also be suitable for native-speaking students who would like to learn more about these strategies. It is most suitable for students who are starting their literature reviews.

There are no prerequisites for this workshop.

Tasks

Optional short written tasks will be included in the workshop. It is recommended that participants take the time to do these tasks in order to come to a deeper understanding of the strategies introduced. Students may wish to consider working through the materials with a colleague, for peer support and discussion. Provision will be made for participants who wish to do so to submit these tasks for feedback between June 2nd and June 9th, 2021.

Learning outcomes

At the end of this workshop, students will be able to:

- identify the differences between good and weak literature reviews.
- select the most appropriate strategies for making and organizing notes from their reading.
- structure a conventional, thematic literature review in a logical way.