Writing an abstract

Introduction

An abstract provides a short and concise summary of the entire study. It should provide readers enough information to decide whether they want to read it in detail. **Please note:** An abstract is **not** the same as an introduction.

How to write an abstract?

An abstract is usually between 200 to 300 words and fits on one A4 page.

In general, the following **four** parts of information should be included:

1. **Most general background information and purpose of the study**. It needs to be brief and clear enough for your reader to understand your area and why you carry out the study.

2. **Methods**. You need to provide specific information on how you carried out the study, e.g. basic design or techniques used.

3. **Key findings/results**. It should clearly report the findings that link to the purpose of the study, e.g. statistics, changes, differences or trends

4. **Conclusions and recommendation (if applicable).** This is the last part of your abstract. You should state the significance of the study. You may need to provide solutions or recommendations for issues identified in the study.

Learning **Resources**

Example of a good abstract

- **Purple** = part 1
- **Black** = part 2
- **Orange** = part 3
- **Blue** = part 4

Since the 1990s there has been growing attention to research in the area of Learning Development within universities (Zhang, 2012). Many universities in the UK have put more effort into providing support for students' study skills development. Currently, the most commonly used teaching methods to enhance students' study skills are online resources, workshops and 1:1 appointment (Dobson, 2011). However, there is little empirical evidence to show which teaching method works effectively for students. To bridge the gap, this study investigated which of these teaching methods is most beneficial in terms of enhancing the student experience and improving attainment and why. The study employed mixed methods. Firstly, to identify the most beneficial teaching methods, a structured online survey was administered to all the students in the University of Bedfordshire. In total, 1,940 students completed the survey. Data was analysed by using Excel. Secondly, in-depth face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 of the questionnaire respondents. The data was analysed to identify and categorise themes emerged. The results found that 78% of respondents agreed that 1:1 provision was the most beneficial method. Results from the interview supported the survey finding. It emerged that the reasons why students responded 1:1 support positively were: 1) students could understand feedback and subject better; 2) it helps students to build up their confidence; 3) it helps equalising empower difference. The empirical research findings clearly showed that students would benefit both emotionally and academically from 1:1 sessions. It is recommended that universities and staff should invest more on personal tutor contact with students.

Further information

The Learning Resources Study Hub provides a range of opportunities (such as workshops and drop-ins) for you to enhance your academic skills. For more information visit: **lrweb.beds.ac.uk/studyhub**