

## How to Write an Abstract

Essentially, the abstract should stand on its own. After all, it's a mini-version of your entire essay—the purpose of which is to allow your reader to determine whether the full paper will be of use or interest to them. You have 300 words to encapsulate your essay for the examiner.

### J: abstract

(Objective 5)  
The requirements for the abstract are for it to state clearly the research question that was investigated, how the investigation was undertaken and the conclusion(s) of the essay.

Achievement level	Descriptor
0	The abstract exceeds 300 words <b>or</b> one or more of the required elements of an abstract (listed above) is missing.
1	The abstract contains the elements listed above but they are not all clearly stated.
2	The abstract clearly states all the elements listed above.

1. Write the abstract last. Don't attempt to write it until you are finished with your whole draft.
2. Make sure you include the 3 required elements: the research question, how the investigation was undertaken, and the conclusion (s) of your research. Pay attention to the scoring criteria for the abstract.
  - ✓ The **research question** (RQ) should be part of the abstract, not a separate question at the top of the page.
    - Consider starting the abstract with a background statement that puts your topic in context (this might take you 2 sentences). Write a sentence or two that state the purpose of your research or reason for choosing your topic. NOTE: You may want to refer back to the exercise that I had you do when starting to phrase your research question—Writing Purposeful Questions.
      - Use your purpose to move on to the inclusion of your RQ. For example, you might include the RQ by saying something like... “As a result, the following research question was undertaken for this essay: To what extent did.....?”

- ✓ **How your investigation was undertaken** should be more than a listing of what you did. That is, it's not enough to say I went to the library and researched my topic by reading books and scholarly articles. Instead, describe your research journey, how you constructed your evidence and where it led you. Explain what you did.
- ✓ State your main conclusion(s). What did you reasonably conclude from your research? You are in essence answering your RQ by stating what you have concluded from your research.

3. Go to ManageBac and read the abstract on the exemplar that scored an A in your subject area.

4. Have someone read your abstract to make sure the required elements are present. You can proofread it yourself by highlighting the 3 elements.

5. The abstract is a formal piece of writing.

- ✓ Write in 3<sup>rd</sup> person
- ✓ Block style (no indenting, one continuous paragraph)
- ✓ On a separate page
- ✓ Word count double spaced below last line
- ✓ You have 300 words—use them. An abstract of less than 250 words is not in your best interest.