
LIT REVIEWS AND SYNTHESISING RESEARCH

SLS WEBINAR PROGRAM

CONTACT:

Student Learning Support

WEBINAR GOALS

During this webinar you will learn:

- the purpose and structure of a Lit Review.
- how to search for literature.
- how to synthesise research in a paragraph.

WHAT IS A LITERATURE REVIEW?

A literature review **classifies** and **evaluates** what has been written on a topic by scholars and researchers. It is structured according to your assessment question or task such as a research proposal and the problem/issue you wish to investigate.



A LITERATURE REVIEW IS NOT...

an annotated bibliography or summaries of what you have read (journal articles, books, reports) or an opinionated, argumentative essay.



THE PURPOSE OF A LITERATURE REVIEW

Purpose/s of a literature review is to:

- identify key studies on your topic that illustrate how the subject has been studied previously.
- demonstrate familiarity with the field.
- show respect to previous scholars.
- identify and explain key terms and concepts.
- establish a theoretical framework for your topic.
- identify methods relevant to your project.
- show where your research fits in to the existing body of knowledge and position your project in context.
- identify gaps or controversies in previous research.
- develop questions for further research.

SEARCHING THE LITERATURE STEPS

The Research Question



Types of Literature



How to Search



Recording the Search



Reference Management

THE RESEARCH QUESTION

Identify and Articulate the Topic

1. Identify a problem or area of interest.
2. Read literature in and around the general topic.
3. Articulate the topic by writing a hypothesis or thesis statement.
4. Refine and Clarify the Topic



TYPES OF LITERATURE

- Research Literature
- Theory-based Literature
- Philosophical Literature
- Empirical or Practice-based Literature
- Statistical Reports
- Grey Literature



- Books
- Journal Articles
- Audio visual material
- Government policies & reports
- Statistical reports
- Legal resources
- Conference papers
- Websites

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WHERE TO SEARCH

You can use these databases in the library website search resources:

- MultiSearch
- A-Z Journal Databases
- A-Z eBook Databases
- A-Z Reference Works
- Google Scholar & Google Books

The Information Skills tab in the library website can guide you through steps to searching:

https://libguides.navitas.com/information_skills

DEVELOP A SEARCH STRATEGY

Employ a Systematic Approach

1. Copy and paste the same search term into numerous sources opened in multiple tabs across the top of your internet browser
2. As you pick up new key terms by reading the material you find, often a new set of criteria will emerge with which to search the literature.
3. Record each search as you go using the research tracker template

Advanced Searching

- Use **Search Boxes**
- Use a Boolean Operator to connect search terms – **AND/OR/NOT**
- **Select a field** in drop down menus
- Use the **Refine Results** menu

The Information Skills tab in the library website can guide you through steps to searching:
https://libguides.navitas.com/information_skills

RECORD THE SEARCH

Record your searches using the template

PsycInfo		Check with your teacher or a librarian about other suitable databases. For example if you are researching across disciplines you may need to use other sources and discipline-specific databases.			
Date	Set	Search string	Results Retrieved	Results Saved after Appraisal	Results Cited in My Review
EXAMPLE --	1	"food security" AND students	87	12	4
EXAMPLE --	2	TI("food security" OR "food insecurity" OR hunger OR starvation OR nutrition) AND AB (tertiary OR university OR college OR "higher education") Limiters - References Available; Publication Year: 2010-2016	204	24	7
	3				
	4				
	5				
	6				

Notes/Comments

Include notes about the appraisal process and what criteria were used to include or exclude results. Make any comments about the search process that might aid in the replication of this search.

<https://libguides.navitas.com/literature-review/recording>

CITATION CHAINING

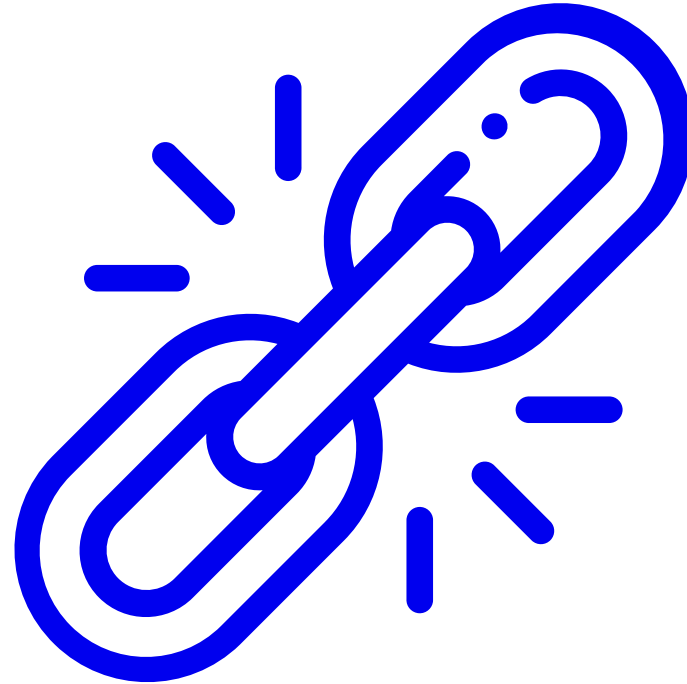
Backwards and forwards chaining to find more research on a topic

Backwards Chaining

Finding articles and books that are cited in the resources that you have already found.

Forwards Chaining

Finding articles and books that cite a resource that you have already found.



REFERENCE MANAGEMENT

- Saving references / sources to your eShelf or personalised folders
- Exporting bibliographic data to referencing management tools such as Mendeley (RIS)

Reference Management Software

- Mendeley
- Zotero
- ZoteroBib

<https://navitas.libcal.com/appointments/>



EVALUATING THE LITERATURE

	Yes	No
Publisher		
Recognised academic publisher		
Peer reviewed/refereed		
Content		
Contains good arguments		
Includes evidence for claims		
Shows limitations		
Appears to be unbiased		
Includes references to others' work		
Context in discipline		
Makes a useful contribution to field		
Agrees with current thought		
Introduces new thought		
Methodology		
Shows strong reasoning		
Makes replication possible		
Has an adequate sample size		
Author		
Well known in the field		
Affiliated with a university		
Easy to understand in terms of writing style		
Relevance		
Recent publication		
Results/conclusions are relevant to your study		
Country where research was conducted relates to your own research		
Purpose is similar to your own research		

Use checklists to test the literature you find

READING CRITICALLY

- What was the purpose of the research?
- What was the aim/objectives of the research?
- What are claims are being made? (What is the author's argument?)
- What evidence is used to support the argument/s?
- What was the outcome of the research?
- What approaches/methods/strategies were used?
- What context was the research conducted? (Does this matter?)
- What was its contribution to the field?
- What was its significance?
- What can be learnt from it?
- How is it relevant to my assignment question/research question/theory or practice?

READING CRITICALLY

You will also need to read critically, which means gaining a deeper understanding of the material and see that there are **layers of meaning** within a text.



Literal

What is literally in the text

Interpretive

What is inferred in the text (i.e. reading between the lines)

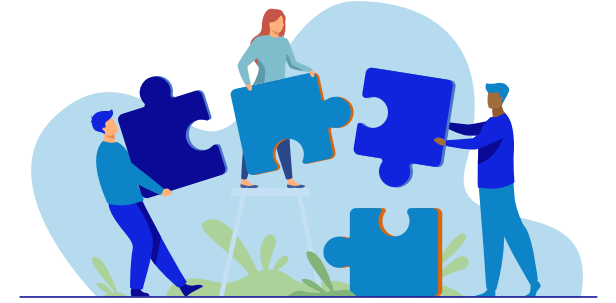
Applied

Applying an understanding beyond the text

EVALUATING THE LITERATURE

Article information	Article 1		Article 2	
	Title:	Method Used:	Title:	Method Used:
	Author:		Author:	
	Date:	Sample Size:	Date:	Sample Size:
	Authority:		Authority:	
Main Findings / arguments/ recommendations				
Similarities to other articles				
Differences to other articles				
Strengths				
Weaknesses				
Gaps in the literature				

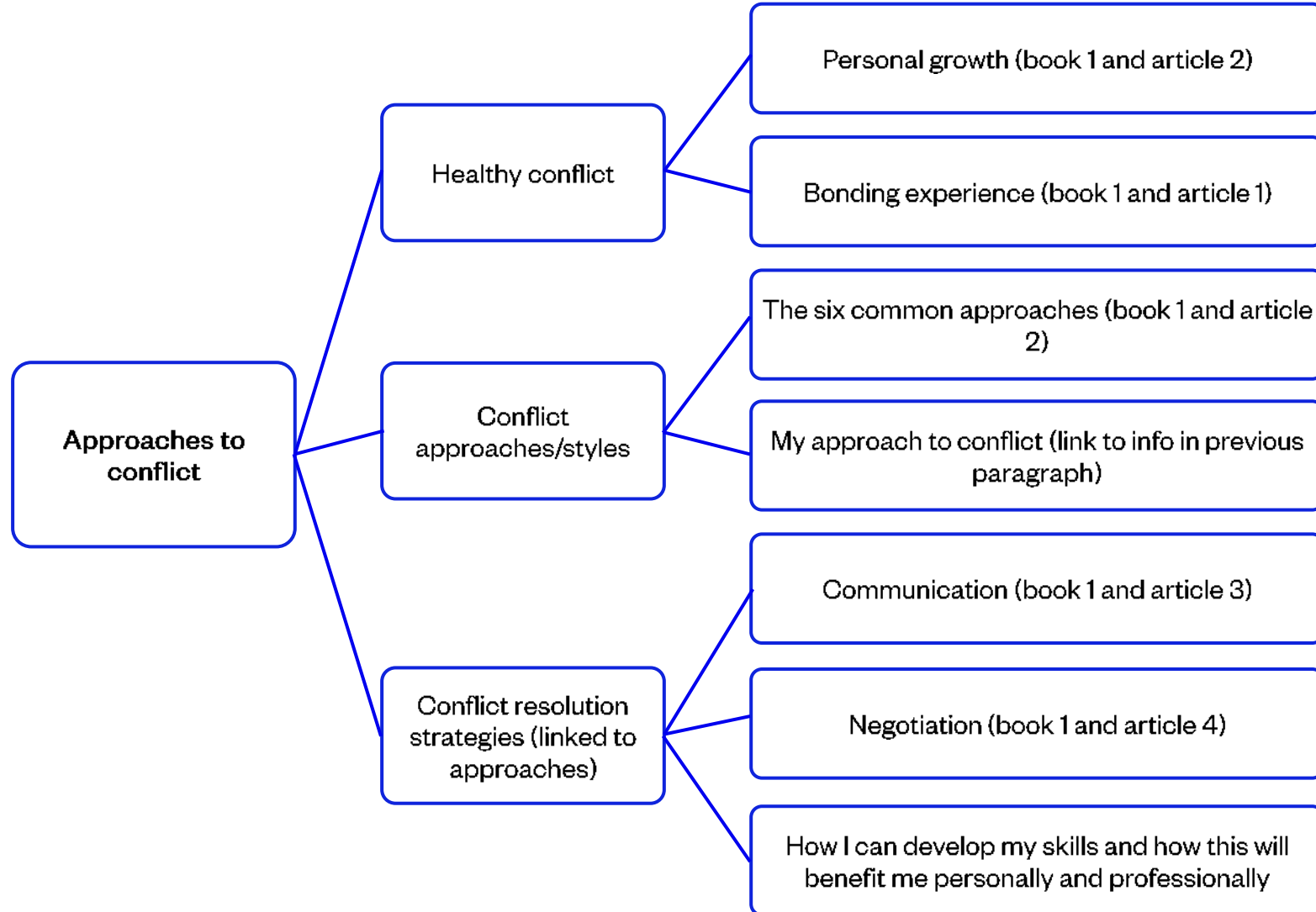
SYNTHESISING INFORMATION



After reading **several texts** relevant to your assignment questions, the critical work of synthesising (combining / blending) the information you have gathered begins...

- Synthesising involves **combining ideas** from a range of sources in order to group and present ideas, themes and issues in a logical and meaningful manner
- You can group the literature into themes, issues, approaches, methods, models/frameworks
- One way to make connections between texts and ideas is to mind map.
- Do you have any other strategies?

SAMPLE MIND MAP



WHAT IS IN A LITERATURE REVIEW?

Features of literature reviews are:



Introduction

- defines the topic
- provides an appropriate context for reviewing the literature
- explains the organisation of your literature review

Body

- organised on the basis of ideas
- the literature is grouped according to common themes
- use headings and subheadings to organise your work - check with your Educator

Conclusion

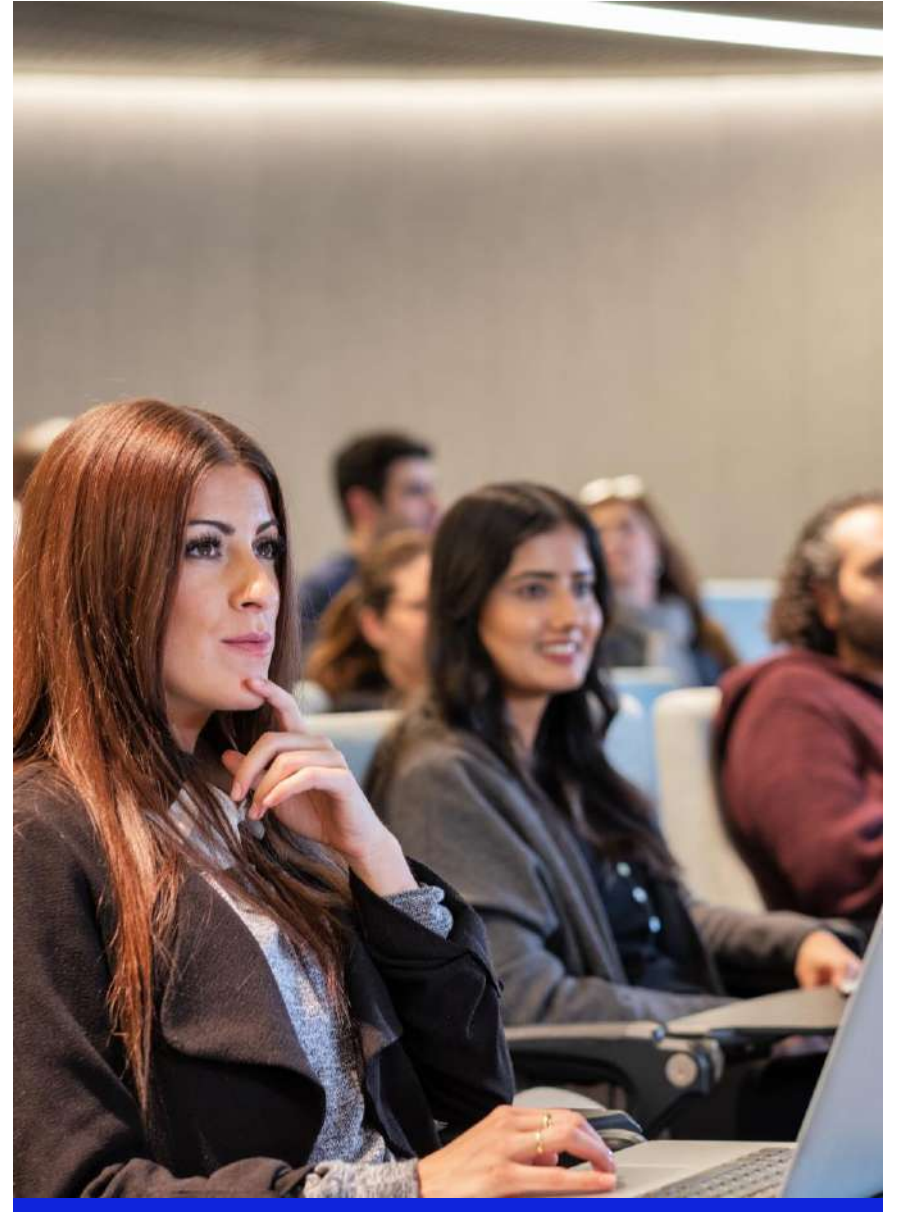
- summarises the major findings of the literature review.
- makes an evaluative statement about the current literature on the topic
- points out major gaps or flaws
- outlines areas for future study.

Tip: Your literature review needs to critically examine the sources, rather than to just simply summarise them.

ORGANISING YOUR LITERATURE REVIEW

Approaches to organising your literature review:

- Historical approach
- Comparative approach
- Problem-solution approach
- Opinion-reason approach
- Methodological approach



COMPARING AND CONTRASTING THE LITERATURE

To identify
relationships
and themes in
the literature,
ask yourself:

1. To what extent is the area of focus in the investigations similar or different?
2. How do the methodologies used by the authors compare?
3. What conclusions are reported by the authors? How do they compare?
4. How do the conclusions and findings add to/support/contradict the existing knowledge of the issue being examined?
5. How do the authors' own views on a topic compare?
6. Do different authors see things from different angles?
7. Do they argue in similar or different ways?
8. What are the major areas where authors disagree?

LANGUAGE FOR COMPARING AND CONTRASTING

Language for Comparing and Contrasting

The majority of Numerous Several Some A few	{ studies authors	{ found demonstrated examined questioned suggest
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[p. 3 Lit Review Language Guide](#)

Despite x, the However the In contrast the Similarly Furthermore	{ author(s)	{ found perspective is argument is findings are view is
--	-------------	---

[Academic Phrasebank](#)

The literature Research Findings Recommendations	{ is/are	consistent inconsistent clear unclear
---	----------	--

Author takes a	{ similar different complimentary contrasting conflicting	{ view perspective argument view
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EVALUATIVE LANGUAGE

Positive/Endorsing

- It is clear from the research presented by A, B and C that XY is a widely understood concept/theory/argument
- This study is consistent with...
- There is strong evidence that...
- This argument considers not only... but also...

Negative/Dis-endorsing

- Although these studies have presented ABC, there is still little evidence as to how XYZ are affected.
- The researcher/s failed to adequately investigate...
- There is little evidence in support of..
- This argument does not take into account..

Introducing gaps/limitations

- Upon closer analysis of the literature several gaps are revealed including...
- No previous research has...
- Future research needs to address...
- Studies fail to address...
- Several limitations include...

USING EVALUATIVE LANGUAGE

Other types of evaluative language include:

Hedges - can be used to withhold your full commitment to a statement.

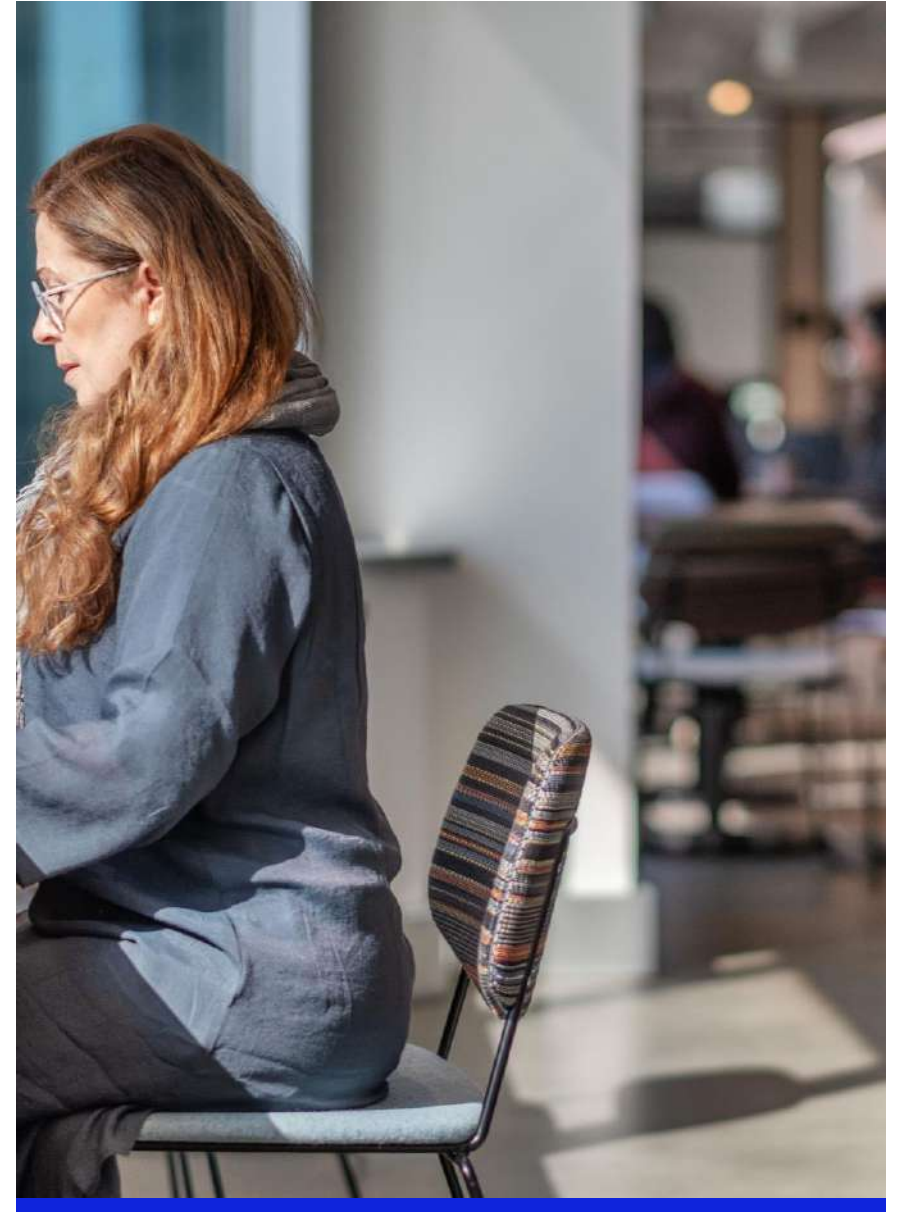
Examples of hedges include: may; might; possibly; likely; seemed to; appeared to

Boosters - reveal your certainty about a statement.

Examples of boosters include clearly; definitely; without doubt

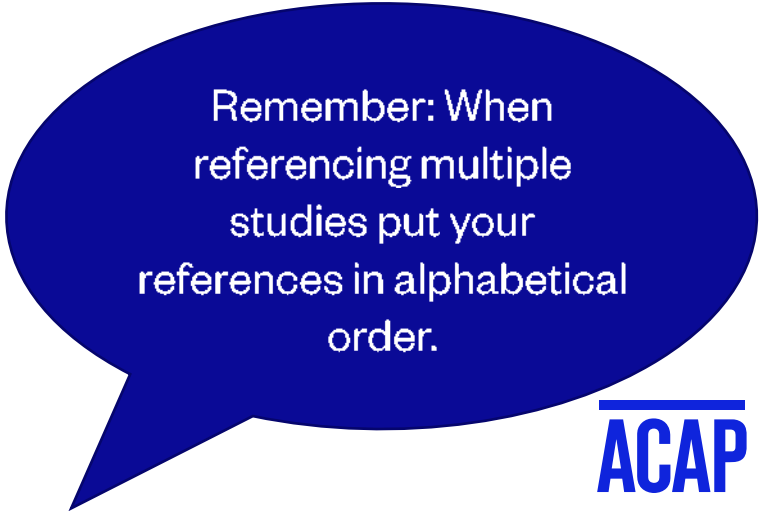
Attitude markers - reveal your attitude towards a statement.

Examples of attitude markers include interestingly; surprisingly; unfortunately



HOW DO I REFERENCE MULTIPLE STUDIES?

Studies have shown that homelessness is associated with problem behaviours in children (Di Biase & Waddell, 2014; Edleman & Mihaly, 2009), strained family relationships (Nyamathi et al., 2015; Vostainis et al., 2006), higher exposure to trauma (Buhrich et al., 2016; Hien & Bukzpan, 2015), increased anger and depression (Marshal et al., 2004) and the negative psychological impact of social stigma (Lankenau, 2013).



Remember: When referencing multiple studies put your references in alphabetical order.

HANDY TIPS

Checklist for completing your literature review:

- Is the purpose and scope of my literature review clearly identified?
- Is the structure of my review clearly stated?
- Are key terms and concepts defined?
- Is the review focused on the most relevant issues and recent developments and research?
- Have I interpreted and evaluated what I have read?
- Have I demonstrated that I have read widely yet remained focused on the topic?
- Have I identified gaps in the research literature and areas for future study?
- Have I grouped ideas and themes clearly?
- Is there a logical flow to my writing?
- Have I acknowledges all sources of information according to APA 7 rules?



RESOURCES

More information on reading strategies

<http://www.mindtools.com/rdstratg.html>

<http://learnline.cdu.edu.au/studyskills/studyskills/reading.html>

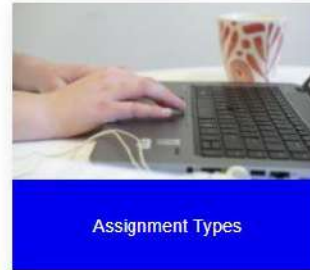
Chrome extensions

Weava Highlighter - <https://www.weavatools.com/>

Spread Speed Reading Extension - <https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/spread-speed-reading-exte/hpnjoanfahcolkdgnfecmncnlfklnllk>



STUDENT LEARNING SUPPORT WEBSITE



<http://sls.navitas-professional.edu.au/>

WHO CAN HELP ME?

Questions about my assignment and class content	Questions and advice about how to develop study skills and improve my academic writing	Timetable, Enrolment, Attendance, Course planning, Extensions, Special Consideration, Accessibility, Counsellor	Class Space, login, email, Office 365	Fees
Your Educator	Your local SLS Advisor	Student Experience team	IT support	Fees and Loans
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Q/A discussion forum •Direct message in the class space •Email Educator 	Click here to find your local contact details	Email: StudentCentral@acap.edu.au Virtual Reception Desk: https://acap.zoom.us/j/660235497 Phone: 1800 061199	Email: helpdesk@my.navitas-professional.edu.au Phone: (02) 9964 6322.	feesandloans@acap.edu.au

CONTACT

Your friendly Student Learning Support (SLS) team

Sydney students

SLSSydney@acap.edu.au

Byron Bay students

SLSByronbay@acap.edu.au

Brisbane students

SLSBrisbane@acap.edu.au

Melbourne students

SLSMelbourne@acap.edu.au

Adelaide students

SLSAdelaide@acap.edu.au

Perth students

SLSPerth@acap.edu.au

Online students

SLSONline@acap.edu.au

HOW DID WE DO?

We would love to get your feedback on this webinar to help us improve our service.

Thank You!



<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/slswebinart12022>

QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU

CONTACT:

Student Learning Support

ACAP Australian
College of
Applied
Professions