

Executive summary guidance

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Organise the executive summary in a logical order that mirrors the structure of the main document. This helps readers follow your arguments and understand the flow of your research.

Use simple language and avoid technical jargon that may not be familiar to all readers. If you must use specialised terms, provide clear definitions.

Before submitting, review your executive summary for clarity, coherence, and conciseness. Make sure it stands alone as a coherent piece of writing that accurately reflects the main document.

Remember, the executive summary is often the first part of your document that readers will encounter, so it's important to make a strong, positive impression that encourages them to read further.

The executive summary should be less than 800 words. Below we provide some structure to help you write your executive summary:

1. **Understand Your Audience:** Keep in mind that your audience may include both scholars in your field and humanitarian practitioners. The summary should be accessible to both groups, using clear and jargon-free language whenever possible.
2. **Introduction/Purpose:** Begin your executive summary by stating the purpose of the research or study. This helps to set the context for the readers and gives them an understanding of what the study aims to achieve.
3. **Methodology:** Provide an overview of the methodology used in the research. This gives readers an insight into how the research was conducted and the basis for the findings. This part should include the research design, data collection methods, and analysis techniques. Keep it brief and avoid detailed technical language.
4. **Key Findings:** Highlight the most important findings of the study. Use bullet points or a numbered list for clarity and to make this section easily scannable. Focus on results that are significant and directly relevant to the research questions or objectives.
5. **Societal Implications:** Explain the implications of your findings for society, in terms of Real-World Impact.
6. **Practical Implications:** Explain the implications of your findings for the field or practice. If applicable, include any recommendations or suggestions for future research, policy, or practice.
7. **Conclusion:** Offer a concise conclusion that wraps up the summary, reiterating the importance of the findings and their potential impact.
8. **Recommendations (if applicable):** If your research includes specific recommendations, briefly outline them. This could relate to further research, policy changes, or practical applications of your findings.