

The Academic Phrasebank is a general resource for academic writers. It makes explicit the more common phraseological 'nuts and bolts' of academic writing.

Academic Phrasebank

A compendium of commonly used phrasal elements in academic English in PDF format

2015b enhanced edition

Personal Copy

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Preface

The Academic Phrasebank is a general resource for academic writers. It aims to provide the phraseological 'nuts and bolts' of academic writing organised according to the main sections of a research paper or dissertation. Other phrases are listed under the more general communicative functions of academic writing.

The resource was designed primarily for academic and scientific writers who are non-native speakers of English. However, native writers may still find much of the material helpful. In fact, recent data suggests that the majority of users are native speakers of English.

The phrases, and the headings under which they are listed, can be used simply to assist you in thinking about the content and organisation of your own writing, or the phrases can be incorporated into your writing where this is appropriate. In most cases, a certain amount of creativity and adaptation will be necessary when a phrase is used.

The Academic Phrasebank is not discipline specific. Nevertheless, it should be particularly useful for writers who need to report their empirical studies. The phrases are content neutral and generic in nature; in using them, therefore, you are not stealing other people's ideas and this does not constitute plagiarism.

Most of the phrases in this compendium have been organised according to the main sections of a research report. However, it is an over-simplification to associate the phrases only with the section in which they have been placed here. In reality, for example, many of phrases used for referring to other studies may be found throughout a research report.

In the current PDF version, additional material, which is not phraseological, has been incorporated. These additional sections should be helpful to you as a writer.

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About Academic Phrasebank

Theoretical Influences

The Academic Phrasebank largely draws on an approach to analysing academic texts originally pioneered by John Swales in the 1980s. Utilising a genre analysis approach to identify rhetorical patterns in the introductions to research articles, Swales defined a 'move' as a section of text that serves a specific communicative function (Swales, 1981,1990). This unit of rhetorical analysis is used as one of the main organising sub-categories of the Academic Phrasebank. Swales not only identified commonly-used moves in article introductions, but he was interested in showing the kind of language which was used to achieve the communicative purpose of each move. Much of this language was phraseological in nature.

The resource also draws upon psycholinguistic insights into how language is learnt and produced. It is now accepted that much of the language we use is phraseological; that it is acquired, stored and retrieved as pre-formulated constructions (Bolinger, 1976; Pawley and Syder, 1983). These insights began to be supported empirically as computer technology permitted the identification of recurrent phraseological patterns in very large corpora of spoken and written English using specialised software (e.g. Sinclair, 1991). Phrasebank recognises that there is an important phraseological dimension to academic language and attempts to make examples of this explicit.

Sources of the phrases

The vast majority of phrases in this resource have been taken from authentic academic sources. The original corpus from which the phrases were 'harvested' consisted of 100 postgraduate dissertations completed at the University of Manchester. However, phrases from academic articles drawn from a broad spectrum of disciplines have also been, and continue to be, incorporated. In most cases, the phrases have been simplified and where necessary they have been 'sifted' from their particularised academic content. Where content words have been included for exemplificatory purposes, these are substitutions of the original words. In selecting a phrase for inclusion into the Academic Phrasebank, the following questions are asked:

- does it serve a useful communicative purpose in academic text?
- does it contain collocational and/or formulaic elements?
- are the content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives) generic in nature?
- does the combination 'sound natural' to a native speaker or writer of English?

When is it acceptable to reuse phrases in academic writing?

In a recent study (Davis and Morley, 2015), 45 academics from two British universities were surveyed to determine whether reusing phrases was a legitimate activity for academic writers, and if so, what kind of phrases could be reused. From the survey and later from in-depth interviews, the following characteristics for acceptability emerged. A reused phrase:

- should not have a unique or original construction;
- should not express a clear point of view of another writer;
- depending on the phrase, may be up to nine words in length; beyond this 'acceptability' declines;
- may contain up to four generic content words (nouns, verbs or adjectives which are not bound to a specific topic).

Some of the entries in the Academic Phrasebank, contain specific content words which have been included for illustrative purposes. These words should be substituted when the phrases are used. In the phrases below, for example, the content words in bold should be substituted:

- X is a major **public health** problem, and the cause of ...
- X is the leading cause of death in **western-industrialised countries**.

The many thousands of disciplinary-specific phrases which can be found in academic communication comprise a separate category of phrases. These tend to be shorter than the generic phrases listed in Academic Phrasebank, and typically consist of noun phrases or combinations of these. Acceptability for reusing these is determined by the extent to which they are used and understood by members of a particular academic community.

Further work

Development of the website content is ongoing. In addition, research is currently being carried out on the ways in which experienced and less-experienced writers make use of the Academic Phrasebank. Another project is seeking to find out more about ways in which teachers of English for academic purposes make use of this resource.

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Major sections

Writing Introductions

There are many ways to introduce an academic essay or short paper. Most academic writers, however, appear to do one or more of the following in their introductions:

- establish the context, background and/or importance of the topic
- indicate an issue, problem, or controversy in the field of study
- define the topic or key terms
- state the purpose of the essay or piece of writing
- provide an overview of the coverage and/or structure of the writing

In very short assignments, it is not uncommon for a writer to commence simply by stating the purpose of their writing.

Introductions to research dissertations tend to be relatively short but quite complex in terms of their functional elements. Some of the more common elements or include:

- establishing the context, background and/or importance of the topic
- giving a brief synopsis of the relevant literature
- highlighting the inadequacy of previous research
- indicating a problem, controversy or a knowledge gap in the field of study
- establishing the desirability of the research
- listing the research questions or hypotheses
- providing a synopsis of the research method(s)
- explaining the significance or value of the study
- defining certain key terms
- providing an overview of the dissertation or report structure
- explaining reasons for the writer's personal interest in the topic

Examples of phrases which are commonly employed to realise these functions are listed on the following pages. Note that there may be a certain amount of overlap between some of the categories under which the phrases are listed. Also, the order in which the different categories of phrases are shown reflects a typical order but this is far from fixed or rigid, and not all the elements are present in all introductions.

A number of analysts have identified common patterns in the introductions of research articles. One of the best known is the CARS model (create a research space) first described by John Swales (1990)¹. This model, which utilises an ecological metaphor, has, in its simplest form, three elements or moves:

- Establishing the territory (establishing importance of the topic, reviewing previous work)
- Identifying a niche (indicating a gap in knowledge)
- Occupying the niche (listing purpose of new research, listing questions, stating value, indicating structure of writing)

¹ Swales, J. (1990) *Genre Analysis*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Establishing the importance of the topic for the discipline

A key aspect of X is ...
X is of interest because ...
X is a classic problem in ...
A primary concern of X is ...
X is a dominant feature of ...
X is a fundamental property of ...
The concepts of X and Y are central to ...
X is at the heart of our understanding of ...
Investigating X is a continuing concern within ...
X is a major area of interest within the field of ...
X has been studied by many researchers using ...
X has been an object of research since the 1960s.
X has been the subject of many classic studies in ...
X has been instrumental in our understanding of ...
The theory of X provides a useful account of how ...
X has been an important concept in the study of the ...
Central to the entire discipline of X is the concept of ...
X is an increasingly important area in applied linguistics.
X has been the subject of much systematic investigation.
The issue of X has received considerable critical attention.
Understanding the complexity of an X is vitally important if ...
X has long been a question of great interest in a wide range of fields.
One of the most significant current discussions in legal and moral philosophy is ...
The discovery of X in 1986 triggered a huge amount of innovative scientific inquiry.
The role of X in Y has received increased attention across a number of disciplines in recent years.

Establishing the importance of the topic for the world or society

X is fundamental to ...
X has a pivotal role in ...
X is an important aspect of ...
X is frequently prescribed for ...
X is fast becoming a key instrument in ...
X plays a vital role in the metabolism of ...
X is the most widely distributed species of ...
X plays a critical role in the maintenance of ...
Xs have emerged as powerful platforms for ...
X is essential for a wide range of technologies.
X can play an important role in addressing the issue of ...
Xs are the most potent anti-inflammatory agents known.
There is evidence that X plays a crucial role in regulating ...
X is a common condition which has considerable impact on ...
In the new global economy, X has become a central issue for ...
Determining the impacts of X on Y is important for the future of ...
Evidence suggests that X is among the most important factors for ...
X is important for a wide range of scientific and industrial processes.
Xs are one of the most widely used groups of antibacterial agents and ...
There is a growing body of literature that recognises the importance of ...
X is an important component in the climate system, and plays a key role in Y.
Xs were the most serious and widespread popular disturbances to occur in ...
In the history of development economics, X has been thought of as a key factor in ...

Establishing the importance of the topic (time frame given)

Recently, there has been renewed interest in ...
Traditionally, Xs have subscribed to the belief that ...
One of the most important events of the 1970s was ...
In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in ...
Recent developments in X have heightened the need for ...
The last two decades have seen a growing trend towards ...
Recently, researchers have shown an increased interest in ...
Over the past century, there has been a dramatic increase in ...
Recent trends in X have led to a proliferation of studies that ...
X proved an important literary genre in the early Y community.
The past decade has seen the rapid development of X in many ...
Recently, a considerable literature has grown up around the theme of ...
Recent developments in the field of X have led to a renewed interest in ...
Since it was reported in 2009, X has been attracting considerable interest.
The past thirty years have seen increasingly rapid advances in the field of ...
The changes experienced by X over the past decade remain unprecedented.
In the last few decades, there has been a surge of interest in the effects of ...
The study of X, which includes Y, has grown significantly since the early 1980s.
For more than a century, scientists have been interested in the existence of ...
In light of recent events in X, it is becoming extremely difficult to ignore the existence of ...

Highlighting an important problem

X is a leading cause of ...
One of the main obstacles ...
One of the greatest challenges ...
A key issue is the safe disposal of ...
The main disadvantage of X is that ...
X is associated with increased risk of ...
X is a common disorder characterised by ...
It is now well established that X can impair ...
X is a common, chronic disease of childhood.
X has led to the decline in the population of ...
X is a growing public health concern worldwide.
The main challenge faced by many researchers is the ...
X is one of the most frequently stated problems with ...
Lack of X has existed as a health problem for many years.
X is a major public health problem, and the main cause of ...
Xs are one of the most rapidly declining groups of insects in ...
X is the leading cause of death in western-industrialised countries.
Despite its long clinical success, X has a number of problems in use.
Exposure to X has been shown to be related to adverse effects in ...
There is increasing concern that some Xs are being disadvantaged ...
There is an urgent need to address the safety problems caused by ...
Questions have been raised about the safety of the prolonged use of ...
The prevalence of X is increasing at an alarming rate in all age groups.
Despite its safety and efficacy, X suffers from several major drawbacks:
Along with this growth in X, however, there is increasing concern over ...
X is increasingly recognised as a serious, worldwide public health concern.
X and its consequences are an important, but understudied, cause for concern.

| | |
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| (However,) | <p>X may cause ...</p> <p>X is limited by ...</p> <p>X suffers from ...</p> <p>X is too expensive to be used for ...</p> <p>X has accentuated the problem of ...</p> <p>the performance of X is limited by ...</p> <p>X could be a contributing factor to ...</p> <p>the synthesis of X remains a major challenge.</p> <p>X can be extremely harmful to human beings.</p> <p>research has consistently shown that X lacks ...</p> <p>a major problem with this kind of application is ...</p> <p>the determination of X is technically challenging.</p> <p>current methods of X have proven to be unreliable.</p> <p>these rapid changes are having a serious effect on ...</p> <p>X can be adversely affected under certain conditions.</p> <p>accounting for these varying experiences is problematic .</p> <p>observations have indicated a serious decline in the population of ...</p> |
|------------|---|

Synopsis of literature

Recent evidence suggests that ...

Previous studies have reported ...

Recent studies have shown that ...

Several studies have documented ...

Studies of X show the importance of ...

Several attempts have been made to ...

Previous research has established that ...

Data from several studies suggest that ...

Recent work by historians has established that ...

Previous research comparing X and Y has found ...

Existing research recognises the critical role played by ...

It is now well established from a variety of studies, that ...

Recently investigators have examined the effects of X on Y.

Surveys such as that conducted by Smith (1988) have shown that ...

Factors found to be influencing X have been explored in several studies.

A number of cross-sectional studies suggest an association between X and Y...

Studies over the past two decades have provided important information on ...

A considerable amount of literature has been published on X. These studies ...

In the past two decades, a number of researchers have sought to determine ...

In previous studies of X, different variables have been found to be related to ...

The first serious discussions and analyses of X emerged during the 1970s with ...

There have been a number of longitudinal studies involving X that have reported ...

Xs were reported in the first studies of Y (e.g., Smith, 1977; Smith and Patel, 1977).

What we know about X is largely based upon empirical studies that investigate how ...

Smith (1984: 217) shows how, in the past, research into X was mainly concerned with ...

Results from earlier studies demonstrate a strong and consistent association between ...

There are a large number of published studies (e.g., Smith, 2001; Jones, 2005) that describe the link between ...

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| A number of | studies researchers | have found ... have reported ... have identified have shown that ... have attempted to ... have demonstrated that ... have investigated whether ... have found an association between ... have explored risk factors associated with ... |
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| | |
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| It has been | noted that ... argued that ... shown that ... reported that ... assumed that ... suggested that ... established that ... demonstrated that conclusively shown that ... |
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| | | | |
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| What | we know about X is known about X | comes from is (largely) based on is (largely) derived from | accounts by ... observations of ... laboratory studies. historical data from ... epidemiological studies. brief biographical details. cross-sectional studies of ... studies of people living in ... case studies undertaken in ... contemporary textual sources. small-scale experiments with ... research using laboratory animals. research undertaken in major cities. a few primary sources from the time. studies conducted in populations of X. observations using various animal models. |
|------|-------------------------------------|--|---|

Highlighting a controversy in the field of study

A much debated question is whether ...
The precise effect of X is a much-debated topic.
One major issue in early X research concerned ...
To date there has been little agreement on what ...
The issue has grown in importance in light of recent ...
There has been disagreement on the criteria for defining X
In the literature on X, the relative importance of Y is debated.
One observer has already drawn attention to the paradox in ...
Questions have been raised about the use of animal subjects in ...
In many Xs, a debate is taking place between Ys and Zs concerning ...
Debate continues about the best strategies for the management of ...
There has been much division between historians on the subject of ...
This concept has recently been challenged by X studies demonstrating ...
The debate about X has gained fresh prominence with many arguing that ...
More recently, literature has emerged that offers contradictory findings about ...
Scholars have long debated the impact of X on the creation and diffusion of ...
One of the most significant current discussions in legal and moral philosophy is ...
The relationship between X and Y has attracted conflicting interpretations from ...
One major theoretical issue that has dominated the field for many years concerns ...
The controversy about scientific evidence for X has raged unabated for over a century.
The issue of X has been a controversial and much disputed subject within the field of ...
Several divergent accounts of X have been proposed, creating numerous controversies.
The causes of X have been the subject of intense debate within the scientific community.
In the literature on X, the relative importance of Y has been subject to considerable discussion.

General reference to previous research or scholarship: highlighting paucity of research

There is little published data on ...
No previous study has investigated X .
The use of X has not been investigated.
There is very little published research on ...
There has been no detailed investigation of ...
There has been little quantitative analysis of ...
Data about the efficacy and safety of X are limited.
Up to now, far too little attention has been paid to ...
A search of the literature revealed few studies which ...
The impact of X on Y is understudied, particularly for ...
So far, however, there has been little discussion about ...
In addition, no research has been found that surveyed ...
Surprisingly, the effects of X have not been closely examined.
Surprisingly, X is seldom studied and it is unclear to what extent ...
In contrast to X, there is much less information about effects of ...
X has hitherto received scant attention by scholars of the Y period.
A systematic understanding of how X contributes to Y is still lacking.
Despite the importance of X, there remains a paucity of evidence on ...
There have been no controlled studies which compare differences in ...
The issue of X has attracted very little attention from the scholarly community.
To date, the problem of X has received scant attention in the research literature.
To date, no large-scale studies have been performed to investigate the prevalence of
Although studies have recognised X, research has yet to systematically investigate the effect of ...

| | | | | |
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| To date, Surprisingly, | X | has (still) not (yet) been | closely formally empirically extensively scientifically systematically comprehensively | studied. examined. investigated. |
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| | | | | |
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| There is a | current relative general notable surprising | paucity | of studies of well-controlled studies | investigating ... describing how ... that seek to identify predictors of |
| | | | of empirical research of high-quality research | in the field of ... focusing specifically on ... on the current prevalence of ... |
| | | | of scientific literature of evidence-based literature | specifically relating to ... on the experiences of ... describing the impact of ... |

| | |
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| (Very) few studies have Few (published) studies have | <p>explored ...</p> <p>focused on ...</p> <p>controlled for ...</p> <p>examined how ...</p> <p>compared trends in ...</p> <p>attempted to define ...</p> <p>examined the role of ...</p> <p>measured X in humans.</p> <p>quantified the levels of ...</p> <p>assessed the implications of ...</p> <p>evaluated the effects of X on ...</p> <p>examined the consequences of ...</p> <p>actually examined the impact of ...</p> <p>have systematically investigated ...</p> <p>provided quantitative evidence of ...</p> <p>systematically evaluated the use of ...</p> <p>attempted to quantify the impact of ...</p> <p>adequately tested the effectiveness of ...</p> <p>addressed the long term psychological effects of ...</p> <p>been large enough to provide reliable estimates of ...</p> <p>been conducted to determine the possible effects of ...</p> |
|---|---|

| | | |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Although While Whilst | some research has been carried out on X, | no single study exists which ... no studies have been found which ... no controlled studies have been reported. there is very little scientific understanding of ... only two studies have attempted to investigate ... the mechanism by which ... has not been established. there have been few empirical investigations into ... |
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| | | |
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| So far, To date, Up to now, | there | have been no attempts to examine ... has been very little research directly investigating X. have been very few empirically published accounts of X. |
| | very little | research has been carried out on ... has been published on the subject of ... attention has been paid to the role of X. |
| | few | studies have examined the association between ... studies have investigated X in any systematic way ... randomised clinical trials have specifically investigated X in ... |

Highlighting inadequacies or weaknesses of previous studies (also refer to *Being Critical*)

Previous studies of X have not dealt with ...

Researchers have not treated X in much detail.

Such expositions are unsatisfactory because they ...

Such approaches, however, have failed to address ...

Most studies in the field of X have only focused on ...

Previous published studies are limited to local surveys.

Half of the studies evaluated failed to specify whether ...

The research to date has tended to focus on X rather than Y.

Previously published studies on the effect of X are not consistent.

Smith's analysis does not take account of ..., nor does she examine ...

The existing accounts fail to resolve the contradiction between X and Y.

Most studies of X have only been carried out in a small number of areas.

However, much of the research up to now has been descriptive in nature ...

The generalisability of much published research on this issue is problematic.

Research on the subject has been mostly restricted to limited comparisons of ...

However, few writers have been able to draw on any systematic research into ...

Short-term studies such as these do not necessarily show subtle changes over time ...

Although extensive research has been carried out on X, no single study exists which ...

However, these results were based upon data from over 30 years ago and it is unclear if ...

The experimental data are rather controversial, and there is no general agreement about ...

However, all the previous X research was cross-sectional in design. Therefore, it is unclear if ...

Although there are many reports in the literature on the outcome of X, most are restricted to ...

Some evidence suggests that ..., although further work using X is required to confirm this finding.

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>The existing literature on X</p> <p>Most of the work carried out on X</p> | <p>fails to ...</p> <p>suffers from ...</p> <p>lacks clarity regarding ...</p> <p>ignores the possibility that ...</p> <p>has not distinguished between x and y in a systematic fashion.</p> |
|--|--|

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| <p>No previous study has</p> | <p>controlled for ...</p> <p>been large enough to ...</p> <p>completely eliminated ...</p> <p>distinguished between ...</p> <p>provided information on ...</p> <p>addressed the question of ...</p> <p>assessed the occurrence of ...</p> <p>used a dynamic measure of ...</p> <p>given sufficient consideration to ...</p> <p>employed time-series techniques for ...</p> <p>utilised verbal reports to examine the problem of ...</p> <p>used a method for analysing multiple factors related to ...</p> |
|------------------------------|--|

| | | |
|---|---------------------------|---|
| <p>Previous studies (of X)</p> <p>Most of these studies</p> | <p>have suffered from</p> | <p>small sample sizes.</p> <p>low response rates.</p> <p>multiple design flaws.</p> <p>an overemphasis on ...</p> <p>inconsistent definitions.</p> <p>poorly developed theory.</p> <p>inadequate sample sizes.</p> <p>methodological limitations.</p> <p>serious sampling problems.</p> <p>poor case control matching.</p> <p>experimental design errors.</p> <p>inadequate research design.</p> <p>a lack of clarity in defining ...</p> <p>serious methodological flaws.</p> <p>a high degree of sampling bias.</p> <p>lack of instrumental sensitivity.</p> <p>considerable design limitations.</p> <p>the use of poorly matched controls.</p> <p>a paucity of standardised measures.</p> <p>notable methodological weaknesses.</p> <p>fundamental flaws in research design.</p> <p>lack of a strong theoretical framework.</p> <p>an over-reliance on self-report methodology.</p> <p>a restricted range of methodological approaches.</p> <p>shortcomings in the methods used to select cases.</p> <p>a lack of well-grounded theoretical considerations.</p> <p>several conceptual and methodological weaknesses.</p> |
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| Previous studies (of X) Most of these studies | have | <p>only involved ... only been carried out in ... only been undertaken using ... only provided weak evidence for ...</p> <p>been of poor quality. been limited in a number of ways. been limited to convenience samples. been limited to a small number of cases ...</p> |
|--|------|--|

| | | |
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| Previous studies | have failed to | <p>assess ... measure ... adjust for ... control for ... investigate ... take account of ... separate the effects of ... address the question of ... identify a means by which ... build a definitive model of ... examine the role played by ... clearly differentiate between ... give sufficient consideration to ... consider X as a possible driving factor of ...</p> |
|------------------|----------------|---|

| | | | |
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| Previous studies | have failed to | consider | <p>the impact of ... the reasons for ... the evidence for ... the ways in which ... the contexts in which ... several key aspects of ... the variable nature of ... other explanations for ... the complex nature of ... the potential impact of ... the social dimension of ... the dynamic aspects of ... the underlying causes of ... all the possible effects of ... demographic factors that ... the ethical implications of ... the important role played by ... the broader implications of how ... the unique complexities faced by ... the contextual factors that influence ...</p> |
|------------------|----------------|----------|---|

General reference to previous research or scholarship: highlighting negative outcomes

| | | |
|---|-----------------------------|---|
| Previous studies have failed to | find show demonstrate | a link between ... any treatment effect. a connection between ... significant differences in ... any convincing evidence of ... a causal relationship between ... any support for the X hypothesis. any significant advantages of using ... significant changes in health outcomes ... reliable, repeatable therapeutic effects of ... |
| Recent studies have The research to date has | not been able to | establish ... confirm earlier ... determine whether ... show a link between ... duplicate these results. reproduce these findings. replicate these associations. rule out the possibility that ... provide robust evidence for ... detect an increase in the risk of ... confirm earlier findings showing ... |

Highlighting a knowledge gap in the field of study

... much less is known about X.

Evidence for X has been mixed.

It is still not known whether ...

The nature of X remains unclear.

(Very) little is known about X in ...

What is less clear is the nature of ...

What is not yet clear is the impact of X on ...

There is still uncertainty, however, whether ...

The response of X to Y is not fully understood.

Causal factors leading to X remain speculative.

To date, there has been no reliable evidence that ...

The neurobiological basis of this X is poorly understood.

Little is known about X and it is not clear what factors ...

To date, only a limited number of Xs have been identified.

Much uncertainty still exists about the relationship between ...

To date, studies investigating X have produced equivocal results.

The evidence that X and Y are associated with Z is weak and inconclusive.

This indicates a need to understand the various perceptions of X that exist among ...

It is now well established that ... However, the influence of X on Y has remained unclear.

Some studies have shown the beneficial effects of ..., but others have shown a deterioration in ...

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|---|-------------------|
| To date, (however), there has been | no little | clear solid reliable definitive empirical convincing conclusive experimental | evidence that ... |
|------------------------------------|--------------|---|-------------------|

| | | | |
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| However, | what is not yet | clear known understood | is the role of ... is the nature of ... is the importance of ... is the extent to which ... is the degree to which ... is the actual proportion of ... are the different stages of ... are the circumstances that ... is the actual relationship between ... is the relative importance of the various factors that ... |
|----------|-----------------|------------------------------|--|

| | | | |
|--------------|--------------------|--------------|---|
| What remains | unclear unknown | (, however,) | is how ... is why ... is precisely how ... is to what degree there exists ... is how different species are distributed in ... is how such policies and practices affect the ... is whether these two systems interact. is whether the two conditions are related. is whether or not this finding is a true representation. is whether these two factors operate independently. |
|--------------|--------------------|--------------|---|

| | | | |
|----------|---------------|---|--|
| However, | (exactly) how | X affects Y X inhibits Y X develops X is formed X acquires Y X damages Y X produces Y X increases Y X benefits from Y X contributes to Y | remains unclear. remains poorly understood. is (still) not yet fully understood. |
|----------|---------------|---|--|

| | | | |
|---------------------|--|-----------------------|--|
| The extent to which | X influences Y X determines Y X plays a role in Y X has been successful X changes during ... X presents a risk to Y X corresponds with Y X has been alleviated X has been successful in ... X can be extrapolated to humans the problem of X is facilitated by Y these findings have wider relevance lack of X is causally associated with Y | is (still) remains | unclear. unknown. poorly understood. |
|---------------------|--|-----------------------|--|

| | | | | |
|----------|------------------------|--|------------------------|---|
| However, | several a number of | key further critical essential additional important interesting unresolved unanswered fundamental | questions remain about | the role of ... the nature of ... the effects of ... the aftermath of ... the treatment for ... the development of ... |
|----------|------------------------|--|------------------------|---|

Indicating the focus, aim, argument of a short paper

In this paper, I argue that ...

This paper has four key aims. Firstly, ...

The central thesis of this paper is that ...

In the pages that follow, it will be argued that ...

Secondly, it aims to assess the extent to which ...

In this essay, I attempt to defend the view that ...

Specifically, the following issues will be addressed:

| | |
|------------|--|
| This paper | <p>argues that ...</p> <p>gives an account of ...</p> <p>discusses the case of ...</p> <p>analyses the impact of ...</p> <p>attempts to show that ...</p> <p>contests the claim that ...</p> <p>provides an overview of ...</p> <p>reviews the evidence for ...</p> <p>reports on a study which ...</p> <p>addresses the question of ...</p> <p>presents new evidence for ...</p> <p>traces the development of ...</p> <p>explores the ways in which ...</p> <p>assesses the significance of ...</p> <p>highlights the importance of ...</p> <p>considers the implications of ...</p> <p>evaluates the effectiveness of ...</p> <p>critically examines the view that ...</p> <p>proposes a new methodology for ...</p> <p>surveys recent empirical studies on ...</p> <p>examines the relationship between ...</p> <p>compares the different ways in which ...</p> <p>offers a new model for understanding ...</p> <p>investigates the factors that determine ...</p> <p>describes the design and implementation of ...</p> <p>seeks to remedy these problems by analysing the literature of ...</p> |
|------------|--|

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| The (primary) aim of this paper is to | <p>explore the ...</p> <p>trace the history of ...</p> <p>assess the claim that ...</p> <p>review recent research into the ...</p> <p>explore the relationship between ...</p> <p>contribute to the understanding of ...</p> <p>propose a conceptual theoretical framework based on ...</p> <p>provide empirical and theoretical evidence for the claim that</p> |
|---------------------------------------|--|

| | | |
|-----------------------------|------------|--|
| The aim of this paper is to | critically | <p>analyse the effects of ...</p> <p>examine the claim that ...</p> <p>review the evidence for ...</p> <p>examine the ways in which ...</p> <p>review the different approaches used to ...</p> <p>evaluate the rationale behind X's theory of ...</p> <p>discuss the some of the prominent ideas which ...</p> |
|-----------------------------|------------|--|

Stating the purpose of research

The specific objective of this study was to ...

An objective of this study was to investigate ...

This thesis will examine the way in which the ...

This study set out to investigate the usefulness of ...

This dissertation seeks to explain the development of ...

This case study seeks to examine the changing nature of ...

The objectives of this research are to determine whether ...

The overall aim of this thesis is to review the evidence for ...

This prospective study was designed to investigate the use of ...

The aim of this study was to develop a better understanding of ...

This research examines the emerging role of X in the context of ...

This study systematically reviews the data for..., aiming to provide ...

Drawing upon two strands of research into X, this study attempts to ...

This thesis intends to determine the extent to which ... and whether ...

This dissertation aims to unravel some of the mysteries surrounding ...

This study therefore set out to assess the effect of X ..., and the effect of ...

The main aim of this study is to investigate the differences between X and Y.

Part of the aim of this project is to develop software that is compatible with ...

There are two primary aims of this study: 1. To investigate ... 2. To ascertain ...

This study seeks to obtain data which will help to address these research gaps.

One purpose of this study was to assess the extent to which these factors were ...

The purpose of this investigation was to explore the relationship between X and Y.

The aim of this research project has therefore been to assess the doses and risks associated with ...

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>This study set out to</p> <p>The aim of this study was to</p> <p>The purpose of this study was to</p> | <p>explore ...</p> <p>determine whether ...</p> <p>try and establish what ...</p> <p>better understand the ...</p> <p>find a new method for ...</p> <p>evaluate how effective ...</p> <p>assess the feasibility of ...</p> <p>test the hypothesis that ...</p> <p>explore the influence of ...</p> <p>clarify several aspects of ...</p> <p>investigate the impact of ...</p> <p>identify the predictors for ...</p> <p>investigate the effect of X on Y.</p> <p>develop an understanding of ...</p> <p>gain further understanding of ...</p> <p>compare the two ways of treating ...</p> <p>examine the relationship between ...</p> <p>evaluate a new method of measuring ...</p> <p>determine the predictive validity of the...</p> <p>understand the views and experiences of ...</p> <p>review in detail the available information on ...</p> <p>describe some of the more recent developments in ...</p> <p>shine new light on these debates through an examination of ...</p> |
|--|--|

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>The purpose of this study was to</p> <p>The aim of this investigation has been to</p> | <p>predict which ...</p> <p>establish whether ...</p> <p>determine whether ...</p> <p>develop a model for ...</p> <p>examine the effects of ...</p> <p>assess the extent to which ...</p> <p>compare the clinical performance of ...</p> <p>explore the relationship between X and Y.</p> <p>identify the most important factors influencing ...</p> |
|--|--|

Research questions or hypotheses

The hypothesis that will be tested is that ...

The research questions in this study focused on ...

The central question in this dissertation asks how ...

Specifically, the following issues will be addressed:

The specific questions which drive the research are:

This research seeks to address the following questions:

The key research question of this study was whether or not ...

This study aimed to address the following research questions:

The study sought to answer the following specific research questions:

In particular, this dissertation will examine six main research questions:

Another question is whether ...

Synopsis of the research design, method, source(s) of data

Data for this study were collected using...

Five works will be examined, all of which ...

This paper uses archival data from X to study ...

A mixed-method approach was employed using ...

This investigation takes the form of a case-study...

Qualitative content analysis was used to examine ...

This study utilised clustering techniques to identify ...

Contemporary source material was used to examine ...

This study was exploratory and interpretative in nature.

This study uses a qualitative case study approach to investigate ...

The research data in this thesis is drawn from four main sources: ...

This study employed survey methodology to investigate the impact of ...

The approach to empirical research adopted for this study was one of ...

This dissertation follows a case-study design, with in-depth analysis of ...

By employing qualitative modes of enquiry, I attempt to illuminate the ...

Qualitative and quantitative research designs were adopted to provide ...

This study makes use of oral history interviews as well as archival sources.

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used in this investigation.

A holistic approach is utilised, integrating X, Y and Z material to establish ...

The study was conducted in the form of a survey, with data being gathered via ...

The methodological approach taken in this study is a mixed methodology based on ...

A combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches was used in the data analysis.

| | | | |
|-----------------|--|----------------|---|
| This study uses | recent survey archival empirical interview qualitative quantitative longitudinal observational | data from X to | assess ... explore ... examine ... estimate ... investigate ... |
|-----------------|--|----------------|---|

Indicating significance or value

This research sheds new light on ...

This study provides new insights into ...

The study offers some important insights into ...

The present study fills a gap in the literature by ...

Understanding the link between X and Y will help ...

This is the first study to undertake a longitudinal analysis of ...

The importance and originality of this study is that it explores ...

The present research explores, for the first time, the effects of ...

The findings should make an important contribution to the field of

Characterisation of X is important for our increased understanding of ...

This study provides an exciting opportunity to advance our knowledge of ...

It is hoped that this research will contribute to a deeper understanding of ...

This study aims to contribute to this growing area of research by exploring ...

This project provided an important opportunity to advance the understanding of ...

Therefore, this study makes a major contribution to research on X by demonstrating ...

There are several important areas where this study makes an original contribution to ...

The experimental work presented here provides one of the first investigations into how ...

| | | | |
|---------------------|--|------------------------------------|--|
| The study presented | here in this report in this thesis | is one of the first investigations | to utilise ... to survey ... to explore ... to focus specifically on ... to assess the impact of ... |
|---------------------|--|------------------------------------|--|

Indicating limitations

The thesis does not engage with ...
This study is unable to encompass the entire ...
Establishing X is beyond the scope of this study.
It is beyond the scope of this study to examine the ...
A full discussion of X lies beyond the scope of this study.
The reader should bear in mind that the study is based on ...
Another potential problem is that the scope of my thesis may be too broad.
Due to practical constraints, this paper cannot provide a comprehensive review of...

Giving reasons for personal Interest*

I became interested in Xs after reading ...
My interest in this area developed while I was ...
I have worked closely with X for many years and ...
My personal experience of X has prompted this research.
My main reason for choosing this topic is personal interest.
The genesis of this thesis can be traced back to the time I spent ...
It is my experience of working with X that has driven this research.
This project was conceived during my time working for X. As a medical advisor, I witnessed ...
* sometimes found in the humanities, and the applied human sciences

Outlining the structure

This paper begins by ... It will then go on to ...
The first section of this paper will examine ...
The essay has been organised in the following way.
The remaining part of the paper proceeds as follows: ...
The main issues addressed in this paper are: a), b and c).
This paper first gives a brief overview of the recent history of X.
This paper has been divided into four parts. The first part deals with ...

The aim of the chapter is to introduce ...
This chapter seeks to assess the impact of ...
This chapter is subdivided into three sections
This section will attempt to assess whether ...
The second part highlights the key theoretical concepts which ...
This chapter contextualises the research by providing background information on ...
This chapter discusses the specific methods by which the research and analyses were conducted.

My thesis is composed of four themed chapters.
The overall structure of the study takes the form of six chapters.
The thesis is divided into three distinct sections. The first section ...
Chapter 2 will consider both the sources and methods of study which will include ...
Chapter Two begins by laying out the theoretical dimensions of the research, and looks at how ...
The third chapter is concerned with the methodology employed for this study.
Chapter 4 analyses the data gathered and addresses each of the research questions in turn.
Chapter 5 analyses the results of interviews and focus group discussions undertaken during ...
The fifth section presents the findings of the research, focusing on the three key themes that ...
The purpose of the final chapter is to reflect on the extent to which this study has ...

| | | |
|----------|---|---------------------------------|
| The main | topics issues themes periods developments | covered in this chapter are ... |
|----------|---|---------------------------------|

| | |
|---|---|
| The second part The final chapter The final section | <p>examines ...</p> <p>gives a brief review of ...</p> <p>contextualises the research by ...</p> <p>discusses the significant findings.</p> <p>draws upon the entire thesis to ...</p> <p>identifies areas for further research.</p> <p>ties together the common themes and ...</p> <p>explains the emergent themes influencing ...</p> <p>draws together these various findings, and ...</p> <p>draws together the key findings, making the ...</p> <p>draws together the various strands of the thesis.</p> <p>gives a brief summary and critique of the findings.</p> <p>summarises the main findings of this project and ...</p> <p>summarises the principal findings of these experiments and ...</p> <p>brings together the lessons from these case studies, and then ...</p> <p>describes the experimental approach and instrumentation utilised in ...</p> <p>ties together the various theoretical and empirical strands in order to ...</p> <p>includes a discussion of the implication of the findings to future research into ...</p> |
|---|---|

Explaining Keywords (also refer to *Defining Terms*)

Throughout this paper, the term 'X' will refer to ...

The term 'X' will be used in this thesis to refer to ...

The phrase 'X' will be used in this study to describe the ...

According to Smith (2002), X can be defined as follows: ' ... '

In this article, the abbreviation XYZ will be used to refer to ...

Throughout this dissertation, the term 'X' will be used to refer to ...

The term 'X' is a relatively new name for ..., commonly referred to as ...

In this essay, the term 'X' will be used in its broadest sense to refer to all ...

In this dissertation, the terms 'X' and 'Y' are used interchangeably to mean ...

While a variety of definitions of the term 'X' have been suggested, this paper will use the definition first suggested by Smith (1968) who saw it as ...

Referring to Literature

One of the distinguishing features of academic writing is that it is informed by what is already known, what work has been done before, and/or what ideas and models have already been developed. Thus, in academic texts, writers frequently make reference to other studies and to the work of other authors. It is important that writers guide their readers through this literature. This section of *Academic Phrasebank* lists some of the phrases that writers may use for this purpose.

A note on the literature review: It is the purpose of the literature review section of a paper or dissertation to show the reader, in a systematic way, what is already known about the research topic as a whole, and to outline the key ideas and theories that help us to understand this. As well as being systematic, the review should be evaluative and critical of the studies or ideas which are relevant to the current work. For example, you may think a particular study did not investigate some important aspect of the area you are researching, that the author(s) failed to notice a weakness in their methods, or that their conclusion is not well-supported (refer to *Being Critical*).

A note on referencing style: The way a writer refers to other sources varies somewhat across different disciplines. In some cases, where the individual author is important, the author's name will be the main subject of the sentence; in other cases, the author's name may only be mentioned in brackets (...) or via a number notation system (e.g. footnotes and endnotes). The 'author as subject' style is less common in the empirical disciplines (sciences) and more commonly used in the humanities. Different referencing systems are used in different disciplines. In the majority of the examples given here, the Harvard in-text referencing system has been used.

A note on verb tenses: For general reference to the literature, the present perfect tense (have/has + verb + participle) tends to be used. For reference to specific studies carried out in the past, the simple past tense is most commonly used. This is always the case where a specific date or point in time in the past forms a part of the sentence. When referring to the words or ideas of writers, the present tense is often used if the ideas are still relevant, even if the author is no longer alive. The examples given below reflect these general patterns, but these are by no means rigid.

General descriptions of the relevant literature

The literature on X lacks clarity regarding ...

The literature has emphasised the importance of ...

Different theories exist in the literature regarding ...

More recent attention has focused on the provision of ...

There are relatively few historical studies in the area of ...

A great deal of previous research into X has focused on ...

A large and growing body of literature has investigated ...

Much of the literature since the mid-1990s emphasises the ...

Much of the current literature on X pays particular attention to ...

There is a large volume of published studies describing the role of ...

The existing literature on X is extensive and focuses particularly on ...

There is a relatively small body of literature that is concerned with ...

The generalisability of much published research on this issue is problematic.

A considerable amount of literature has been published on X. These studies ...

What we know about X is largely based upon empirical studies that investigate how ...

The academic literature on X has revealed the emergence of several contrasting themes.

Previous research: History

Research into X has a long history.
For many years, this phenomenon was surprisingly neglected by ...
Prior to the work of Smith (1983) the role of X was largely unknown.
Only in the past ten years have studies of X directly addressed how ...
Over the past decade, most research in X has emphasized the use of ...
In recent years, there has been an increasing amount of literature on ...
Early examples of research into X include ... (Smith, 1962; O'Brien, 1974).
During the past 30 years, much more information has become available on ...
The first serious discussions and analyses of X emerged during the 1970s with ...
Over the past two decades, major advances in molecular biology have allowed ...
Historically, research investigating the factors associated with X has focused on ...
It is only since the work of Smith (2001) that the study of X has gained momentum.
The construct of X was first articulated by Smith (1977) and popularised in his book: ...
It was not until the late 1960s that historians considered X worthy of scholarly attention.
Awareness of X is not recent, having possibly first been described in the 5th century B.C by ...
Around the early 1960s small-scale research and case studies began to emerge linking the use of ...

Previous research: Approaches taken

Most research on X has been carried out in ...
Most researchers investigating X have utilised ...
The vast majority of studies on X, have been quantitative.
There are number of large cross-sectional studies which suggest ...
Much of the X research has focused on identifying and evaluating the ...
Publications that concentrate on X more frequently adopt a historical or chronological approach ...

| | | |
|--|---|----------------------------------|
| What we know about X is largely based upon | case clinical empirical qualitative laboratory longitudinal comparative experimental observational epidemiological | studies that investigate how ... |
|--|---|----------------------------------|

Reference to current state of knowledge

X is positively related to Y (Smith, 2007).
X is one of the most intense reactions following Y (Zhang, 2003).
X is a principal determining factor of Y (Smith, 2005; Jones, 2013).
There is an unambiguous relationship between X and Y (Rao, 1998).
X is significantly reduced during the first months of ... (Smith, 2000; Jones, 2006).
X has been found to oppose the anti-inflammatory actions of Y on Z (Alourfi, 2004).
A relationship exists between an individual's working memory and their ability to ... (Jones, 2002).
GM varieties of maize are able to cross-pollinate with non-GM varieties (Smith, 1998; O'Brien, 2009).

Reference to previous research or scholarship: normally more than one author

Previous research has established that ...

Data from several studies suggest that ...

It is now well established from a variety of studies, that ...

A number of studies have postulated a convergence between ...

Surveys such as that conducted by Smith (1988) have shown that ...

Many recent studies (e.g. Smith, 2001; Jones, 2005) have shown that ...

Traditionally, it has been argued that ... (e.g. Smith, 1960; O'Brien, 1972).

Twenty cohort study analyses have examined the relationship between ...

Several biographies of Brown have been published. Smith (2013) presents ...

In previous studies on X, different variables have been found to be related to ...

A number of authors have considered the effects of ... (Smith, 2003; Jones, 2004).

Many historians have argued that ... (e.g. Jones, 1987; Johnson, 1990; Smith, 1994).

There is a consensus among social scientists that ... (e.g. Jones, 1987; Johnson, 1990; ...

Data from several sources have identified the increased X and Y associated with obesity.

At least 120 case-control studies worldwide have examined the relationship between ...

It has been demonstrated that a high intake of X results in damage to ... (Smith, 1998; ...).

Numerous studies have attempted to explain ... (for example, Smith, 1996; Kelly, 1998; ...).

Previous research findings into X have been inconsistent and contradictory (Smith, 1996; ...).

Some cross-sectional studies suggest an association between recent adverse life events and ...

There are a large number of published studies (e.g., Smith, 2001; Jones, 2005) that describe the link between ...

| | |
|-------------|---|
| It has been | noted that ... argued that ... shown that ... thought that ... assumed that ... reported that ... observed that ... suggested that ... established that ... demonstrated that ... conclusively shown that ... |
|-------------|---|

| | | | |
|---------------------|---|------|--|
| Previous Several | studies of X surveys of X investigations of X | have | found ... revealed ... reported ... identified ... established ... demonstrated ... shown significant increases in ... |
|---------------------|---|------|--|

| | | | |
|--|---|-------------|---|
| <p>To date, Thus far, Up to now,</p> | <p>several studies previous studies a number of studies</p> | <p>have</p> | <p>used ... found ... reported ... shown that... indicated that ... linked X with Y. suggested that ... demonstrated that ... tested the efficacy of ... identified a link between ... investigated the effects of... begun to examine the use of ... confirmed the effectiveness of ... used longitudinal data to examine ... examined the association between ... attempted to evaluate the impact of ... revealed a correlation between X and Y. analysed the accuracy and precision of ... explored the relationships between X and Y. highlighted factors that are associated with ...</p> |
|--|---|-------------|---|

Several recent studies investigating X have been carried out on ...
Recent evidence suggests that ... (Smith, 1996; Jones, 1999; Johnson, 2001).
Recently, in vitro studies have shown that X can ... (Patel *et al.*, 1997; Jones *et al.*, 1998).
In recent years, a few authors have begun to ... (Smith, 1996; Jones, 1999; Johnson, 2001).

| | | |
|---|-------------|---|
| <p>Recent studies have The research to date has</p> | <p>been</p> | <p>concerned with ... conducted using ... carried out using ... largely exploratory. qualitative in nature. designed to determine whether ... based on relatively small sample sizes. undertaken in a variety of healthcare settings.</p> |
|---|-------------|---|

General reference to previous research or scholarship: highlighting negative outcomes

| | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Previous studies have failed to | find show demonstrate | a (any) benefit in ... a (any) link between ... a (any) treatment effect. a (any) protective effect of ... a (any) connection between ... a (any) correlation between ... a (any) causal relationship between ... a (any) consistent association between ... a (any) statistically significant difference ... (any) convincing evidence of ... (any) benefits associated with ... (any) significant differences in ... (any) support for the X hypothesis. (any) significant advantages of using ... (any) significant changes in health outcomes ... (any) reliable, repeatable therapeutic effects of ... |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|

| | | |
|---|------------------|---|
| Prior studies have Recent studies have The research to date has | not been able to | establish ... confirm earlier ... determine whether ... convincingly show that ... reproduce these findings. account for all aspects of ... replicate these associations. confirm earlier findings showing ... |
|---|------------------|---|

General reference to previous research or scholarship: research topic prominent

The X problem has been extensively studied.

Xs have been studied extensively in vitro, using ...

X has been intensively investigated recently due to its ...

Markers for the prediction of X have been widely investigated.

X has also been shown to reverse the anti-inflammatory effects of Y in ...

These effects have been shown in X (e.g., Smith et al., 1981; Jones, 1996).

Factors thought to be influencing X have been explored in several studies.

The geology of X has been addressed in several small-scale investigations and ...

The roles of X have been studied extensively (Jones, 1989; Johnson, 1994; Smith, 1998).

The causes of X have been widely investigated (Jones, 1987; Johnson, 1990; Smith, 1994).

X has been identified as a major contributing factor to the decline of many species of ... (1).

The relationship between X and Y has been widely investigated (Smith, 1985; Jones, 1987, ...

Reference to previous research: Important studies

The first detailed study of X was ...

Smith (1960) was one of the first to examine ...

The first systematic study of X was reported by ...

One of the most cited studies is that of Smith who sees ...

X is most commonly associated with the work of Jones (1960).

The first major fieldwork project that was undertaken in X was ...

A good summary of the classification of X has been provided in the work of ...

In a comprehensive literature review of X, Smith identified three significant ...

One well-known study that is often cited in research on X is that of Smith (1972), who found ...

The innovative and seminal work of Smith pioneered a new approach to examining X and provided a valuable insight into ...

Reference to previous research: Important texts

In his seminal text, XXXXX, Smith devoted some attention to

One of the most influential accounts of X comes from Smith (1986).

In Smith's landmark paper XXXXX (1956), he adopted a Y approach to

X, writing in the fifth century BC, provides the earliest description of ...

One well-known early study that is often cited in research on X is that of ...

In her seminal paper entitled XXXXX, Smith (1981) identified problems with ...

Among the historiography of X, perhaps the most well-known work is that of ...

Smith, in his comprehensive biography of X, devoted a substantial section to ...

Davies *et al.*, in their book XXXXX (2006), give some reliable methods for calculating ...

A more substantial approach to the longer-term significance of X can be found in Smith's recent article in ...

Reference to single investigations in the past: researcher prominent

Smith's comparative study (2012) found that ...

Jones's comprehensive review concluded that ...

Brown's (1992) model of X assumes three main ...

Smith's cross-country analysis (2012) showed that ...

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Smith (1999) | showed that reducing X to 190°C decreased ... (see Figure 2) . demonstrated that when the maximum temperature is exceeded ... found that as levels of literacy and education of the population rise ... |
|--------------|---|

| | |
|--|--|
| To examine this issue ... To determine whether the ... To compare the X with Y, we ... To further investigate the role of ... To further examine the role of ... | Smith <i>et al.</i> (1984) carried out a series of experiments |
|--|--|

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Jones <i>et al.</i> (2001) | <p>compared the rate of ...</p> <p>labelled these subsets as ...</p> <p>measured both components of the ...</p> <p>used a survey to assess the various ...</p> <p>identified parents of disabled children as ...</p> <p>set up a series of virtual experiments using ...</p> <p>examined the flow of international students ...</p> <p>carried out a number of investigations into the ...</p> <p>studied the effects of X on unprotected nerve cells.</p> <p>analysed the data from 72 countries and concluded that ...</p> <p>interviewed 250 undergraduate students using semi-structured ...</p> <p>performed a similar series of experiments in the 1960s to show that ...</p> <p>reviewed the literature from the period and found little evidence for this ...</p> <p>conducted a series of trials in which he mixed X with different quantities of ...</p> <p>investigated the differential impact of formal and non-formal education on ...</p> |
|----------------------------|--|

Reference to single investigations in the past: investigation prominent

One longitudinal study found that ...

A seminal study in this area is the work of ...

One study by Smith (2014) examined the trend in ...

A recent study by Smith and Jones (2012) involved ...

A qualitative study by Smith (2003) described how ...

A recent systematic literature review concluded that ...

A longitudinal study of X by Smith (2012) reports that ...

Preliminary work on X was undertaken by Abdul Karim (1992).

A key study comparing X and Y is that of Smith (2010), in which ...

The first systematic study of X was reported by Patel *et al.* in 1986.

Detailed examination of X by Smith and Patel (1961) showed that ...

Analysis of the genes involved in X was first carried out by Smith *et al.* (1983).

A significant analysis and discussion on the subject was presented by Smith (1988).

The study of the structural behaviour of X was first carried out by Rao *et al.* (1986).

A small scale study by Smith (2012) reached different conclusions, finding no increase in ...

The study by Jones (1990) offers probably the most comprehensive empirical analysis of ...

In an analysis of X, Smith *et al.* (2012) found ...

In a follow-up study, Smith *et al.* (2009) found that ...

In an investigation into X, Smith *et al.* (2012) found ...

In a study investigating X, Smith (2004) reported that ...

In a comprehensive study of X, Jones (2001) found that ...

In a study conducted by Smith (1978), it was shown that ...

In studies of rats given X, Smith and colleagues found that ...

In a study which set out to determine X, Smith (2012) found that ...

In a randomised controlled study of X, Smith (2012) reported that ...

In another major study, Zhao (1974) found that just over half of the ...

In a recent cross-sectional study, Smith (2006b) investigated whether ...

In a large longitudinal study, Smith *et al.* (2012) investigated the incidence of X in Y.

In one well-known recent experiment, limits on X were found to be ... (Al-Masry, 2013)

Reference to single investigations in the past: research topic prominent

X, Y and Z are closely linked (Smith , 2008)

To determine the effects of X, Zhao *et al.* (2005) compared ...

X appears to be positively related to both Y and Z (Smith , 2007)

X was originally isolated from Y in a soil sample from ... (Wang *et al.*, 1952).

The electronic spectroscopy of X was first studied by Smith and Jones in 1970.

X formed the central focus of a study by Smith (2002) in which the author found ...

X was first demonstrated experimentally by Pavlov (Smith, 2002). In his seminal study ...

The acid-catalyzed condensation reaction between X and Y was first reported by Smith in 1872

To better understand the mechanisms of X and its effects, Al-Masry (2013) analysed the ...

The way in which the X gene is regulated was studied extensively by Ho and colleagues (Ho *et al.* 1995 and 1998).

Reference to what other writers do in their text: author prominent

In Chapter 2, Smith provides us with a number of important ...

In the subsequent chapter, Smith examines the extent to which ...

By drawing on the concept of X, Smith has been able to show that ...

Some analysts (e.g. Carnoy, 2002) have attempted to draw fine distinctions between ...

Drawing on an extensive range of sources, the authors set out the different ways in which ...

Other authors (see Harbison, 2003; Kaplan, 2004) question the usefulness of such an approach.

In her review of ...,
In her major study,
In her case study of ...,
In her introduction to ...,
In her seminal article,
In her classic critique of ...,
In her interesting analysis of ...

Smith (2012) identifies five characteristics of ...

Smith (2013)

stresses the role played by ...
draws a distinction between ...
emphasises the importance of ...
challenges the misconception that ...
pinpoints a number of similarities between ...
identifies X, Y, and Z as the major causes of ...
draws on an extensive range of sources to assess ...
highlights the need to break the link between X and Y.
uses examples of these various techniques as evidence that ...
mentions the special situation of Singapore as an example of ...
questions whether mainstream schools are the best environment for ...
draws our attention to distinctive categories of X often observed in ...
considers whether countries work well on cross-border issues such as ...
discusses the challenges and strategies for facilitating and promoting ...
provides in-depth analysis of the work of Aristotle showing its relevance to ...
defines evidence based medicine as the conscious, explicit and judicious use of ...
lists three reasons why the English language has become so dominant. These are: ...
traces the development of Japanese history and philosophy during the 19th century.

Referring to secondary sources

Smith (1973, cited in Jones, 2002) points out that ...

Smith draws on the work of Jones (1959) who suggested that ...

Building on the work of Jones (2000), Smith (2005) argues that ...

Smith (2003) revisits and updates the Jones (1996) model of X by ...

Smith (2000, citing Jones, 1998) points out, X has been shown to result in ...

The view of that ... is supported by Smith (2003) who draws on Jones' (1996) comparison of ...

Reference to another writer's ideas or position: author prominent

As argued by Smith (2003), X is far more cost effective, and therefore ...

According to Smith (2003), preventative medicine is far more cost effective, and therefore ...

| | | | |
|--------------|--|------|---|
| Smith (2013) | claims argues maintains concludes suggests points out | that | preventative medicine is far more cost effective, and therefore better adapted to the developing world. |
|--------------|--|------|---|

| | | | |
|--------------|--|---|--|
| Smith (2013) | offers argues for proposes suggests | an explanatory theory for each type of | |
|--------------|--|---|--|

Synthesising sources: supporting

Similarly, Nicoladis (2006) found that X ...

In the same vein, Smith (1994) in his book XYZ notes ...

This view is supported by Jones (2000) who writes that ...

Smith argues that her data support O'Brien's (1988) view that ...

Al-Masry's (1986) work on X is complemented by Smith's (2009) study of ...

Almost every paper that has been written on X includes a section relating to ...

| | |
|--|--|
| Smith argues that ... Al-Masry (2003) sees X as ... | Similarly, Jones (2013) asserts that ... Likewise, Wang (2012) holds the view that ... In the same vein, Smith (1994) in his book XXXX notes ... |
|--|--|

Synthesising sources: contrasting

Other studies have concluded that ...

Unlike Smith, Jones (2013) argues that ...

In contrast to Smith, Jones (2013) argues that ...

A broader perspective has been adopted by Smith (2013) who argues that ...

Contrary to previously published studies, Johnson *et al.* demonstrated the efficacy of...

Conversely, Wang (2010) reported no significant difference in mortality between X and Y.

Smith (2010) presents an X account, whilst Jones (2011) ...

While Smith (2008) focuses on X, Jones (2009) is more concerned with ...

Some writers (e.g. Smith, 2002) have attempted to draw fine distinctions between ...

Others (see Jones, 2003; Brown, 2004) question the usefulness of ...

Some authors have mainly been interested in questions concerning X (Smith, 2001; Jones ...)

Others have highlighted the relevance of ...

Whilst Smith identifies X as the principal dimension of Y,

Jones (2000) has taken a different approach by focusing on ...

Contrasting sources with 'however' for emphasis

Much of the available literature on X deals with the question of ...

However, Smith (2008) is much more concerned with ...

According to some studies, X is represented as ... (Smith, 2012; Davis, 2014)

However, others propose ... (Jones, 2014; Brown, 2015)

Smith (2013) found that X accounted for approximately 30% of Y.

Other researchers, however, who have looked at X, have found ... Jones (2010), for example, ...

Zhao (2002) reports that ...

Jennings' (2010) study of Y, however, found little evidence of ...

Some ways of introducing quotations

Commenting on X, Smith (2003) argues: '... ...'

As Carnoy (2004: 215) states: 'there are many good reasons to be sceptical'.

As Smith argues: 'In the past, the purpose of education was to ...' (Smith, 2000:150).

In the final part of the *Theses on Feuerbach*, Marx writes: 'Philosophers have hitherto only ...'

Sachs concludes: 'The idea of development stands today like a ruin in ...' (Sachs, 1992a: 156).

| | | |
|----------|---|-------------------|
| As Smith | notes: '... ' argues: '... ' writes: '... ' observes: '... ' points out: '... ' reminds us: '... ' | (Smith 2003: 23). |
|----------|---|-------------------|

Summarising the studies reviewed

Together, these studies indicate that ...

Overall, these studies highlight the need for ...

Considering all of this evidence, it seems that ...

Collectively, these studies outline a critical role for...

The evidence presented in this section suggests that ...

The studies presented thus far provide evidence that ...

Taken together, these studies support the notion that ...

Overall, there seems to be some evidence to indicate that ...

Together these studies provide important insights into the ...

All of the studies reviewed here support the hypothesis that ...

Two important themes emerge from the studies discussed so far:

However, such studies remain narrow in focus dealing only with ...

The evidence reviewed here seems to suggest a pertinent role for ...

These studies clearly indicate that there is a relationship between ...

In view of all that has been mentioned so far, one may suppose that ...

There remain several aspects of X about which relatively little is known.

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Overall, these studies | suggest that ... suggest the efficacy of ... suggest an inverse association between ... suggest that the self-report method possesses ... suggest that both X and Y play a role in the development of ... |
| | illustrate how ... illustrate the role of ... illustrate the flexibility of ... illustrate the heterogeneity of ... illustrate just how important X is in ... |

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Overall, these studies | <p>highlight the need for ...</p> <p>highlight the complexity of ...</p> <p>highlight the positive aspects of ...</p> <p>highlight the beneficial effects of ...</p> <p>highlight the unique relationship between ...</p> |
| | <p>indicate a link between ...</p> <p>consistently indicate that ...</p> <p>clearly indicate the importance of ...</p> <p>indicate that Xs are often important predictors of ...</p> <p>indicate that the X has only a slight impact, if any, on ...</p> |
| | <p>provide mixed evidence for ...</p> <p>provide converging evidence for ...</p> <p>provide evidence for the usefulness of ...</p> <p>provide strong evidence for the efficacy of ...</p> <p>provide reasonably consistent evidence of an association between ...</p> |
| | <p>show weak evidence of ...</p> <p>show that Xs may serve as important ...</p> <p>show a modest correlation between X and Y.</p> <p>show that X is caused by a complex system of ...</p> <p>show that a change from X to Y is usually associated with ...</p> |

Summarising the literature review section

The previous section has shown that ...

In conclusion, these studies show that ...

The evidence reviewed here seems to suggest ...

To conclude this section, the literature identifies ...

This review has demonstrated the shortcomings of ...

In summary, it has been shown from this review that ...

Taken together, these studies support the notion that ...

In summary, little is known about the interrelationships between ...

This section has attempted to provide a brief summary of the literature relating to ...

Describing Methods

In the Methods section of a dissertation or research article, writers give an account of how they carried out their research. The Methods section should be clear and detailed enough for another experienced person to repeat the research and reproduce the results. Where the methods chosen are new, unfamiliar or perhaps even controversial, or where the intended audience is from many disciplines, the Methods section will tend to be much more extensive. Typical stretches of text found in this section of a research article or dissertation along with examples of the kind of language used for these are listed below. Note that for many of the functional categories listed later in this section, the verbs are written in the simple past tense. Most of the verbs are also in the passive form.

Describing previously used methods

- Many researchers have utilized X to measure ...
- One of the most well-known tools for assessing ...
- Traditionally, X has been assessed by measuring ...
- A number of techniques have been developed to ...
- Different methods have been proposed to classify ...
- X is the main non-invasive method used to determine ...
- Different authors have measured X in a variety of ways.
- Previous studies have based their criteria for selection on ...
- X is one of the most common procedures for determining ...
- Several methods currently exist for the measurement of Xs
- There are three main types of study design used to identify ...
- The use of life story data has a relatively long tradition within X.
- Recent advances in X methods have facilitated investigation of ...
- There are a number of instruments available for measuring the ...
- X and Y are currently the most popular methods for investigating ...
- Recently, simpler and more rapid tests of X have been developed.
- In most recent studies, X has been measured in four different ways.
- The use of qualitative case studies is a well-established approach in ...
- Xs have been used in the past to investigate the mechanical properties of ...
- Case studies have been long established in X to present detailed analysis of ...
- This test is widely available and has been used in many investigational studies.
- To date, various methods have been developed and introduced to measure X.
- In recent years, two different approaches have attempted to account for the ...
- The methods for measuring X have varied somewhat across this research area.
- In recent years, molecular methods have been utilised for the quantification of ...
- A variety of methods are used to assess X. Each has its advantages and drawbacks.
- More recent examples of narrative studies within X can be found in the work of Smith (2010).
- Two of the most common methods for estimating X are the use of Y and the measurement of Z.

| | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|---|---|
| Various Different | methods have been | utilized to proposed to employed to | assess ... test for... identify ... capture ... measure ... quantify ... determine ... investigate ... |
|----------------------|-------------------|---|---|

Giving reasons why a particular method was adopted

A major advantage of X is that ...
X based methods provide a means of ...
A case study approach was used to allow a ...
This method is particularly useful in studying ...
A quantitative approach was employed since ...
Qualitative methods offer an effective way of ...
The design of the questionnaires was based on ...
The X method is one of the more practical ways of ...
The semi-structured approach was chosen because ...
The X approach has a number of attractive features: ...
The advantages of Xs are that they are simple to deliver.
The second advantage of using the multivariate method is ...
The study uses qualitative analysis in order to gain insights into ...
One advantage of the X analysis is that it avoids the problem of ...
Another advantage of using computer simulations is that it allows ...
Continuous sampling methods have a number of advantages over ...
The collaborative nature of the focus group offers another advantage ...
It was decided that the best method to adopt for this investigation was to ...
Qualitative methods can be more useful for identifying and characterising ...
Many of the distributions were not normal so non-parametric signed rank tests were run.
It was considered that quantitative measures would usefully supplement and extend the ...

In a recent article, Smith (2009) argues that case studies offer ...
Smith *et al.* (1994) identify several advantages of the case study ...
Case studies are seen as useful when the contextual conditions of the research are ...
According to Smith (2011), semi-structured interviews have a wide-spread popularity in ...
The sensitivity of the X technique has been demonstrated in a report by Smith *et al.* (2011).
Smith (2006) points out that there is a role for both qualitative and quantitative approaches in ...

| | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| A case-study approach was | used chosen adopted | to ensure that ... to help understand how ... to allow a deeper insight into ... to conduct this exploratory study. to evaluate the effectiveness of ... to gain a detailed understanding of ... to determine the factors that affect ... to assess the management practices of ... to obtain further in-depth information on the ... to capture the complexities of the phenomenon. to provide rounded, detailed illustrations of the ... |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|--|

| | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|-----------|----------|--|-------------|
| A(n) The One | key major distinct obvious practical potential additional important significant | advantage | of using | z scores a rating scale focus groups self-report data secondary data longitudinal data retrospective data regression analysis natural speech data semi-structured interviews a convenience sample a case study approach a comparative approach a mixed method approach a multidimensional approach | is that ... |
|--------------------|---|-----------|----------|--|-------------|

Giving reasons why a particular method was rejected

A disadvantage of many cohort studies is that ...

A major problem with the experimental method is that ...

The main disadvantage of the experimental method is that ...

However, there are certain drawbacks associated with the use of ...

However, this method clearly is not valid for analysing long-term trends in ...

There are obvious difficulties in accepting the reliability of self-report information.

There are certain problems with the use of focus groups. One of these is that there is less ...

Describing the characteristics of the sample

The cohort was divided into two groups according to ...

A random sample of patients with ... was recruited from ...

Articles were searched from January 1965 until April 2014.

Forty-seven students studying X were recruited for this study.

A systematic literature review was conducted of studies that ...

Just over half the sample (53%) was female, of whom 69% were ...

Of the initial cohort of 123 students, 66 were female and 57 male.

Eligible women who matched the selection criteria were identified by ...

Only children aged between 10 and 15 years were included in the study.

The participants were divided into two groups based on their performance on ...

Two groups of subjects were interviewed, namely X and Y. The first group were ...

The project used a convenience sample of 32 first year modern languages students.

All of the participants were aged between 18 and 19 at the beginning of the study...

All studies described as using some sort of X procedure were included in the analysis.

Participants were recruited from 15 clinics across ..., covering urban and rural areas ...

The initial sample consisted of 200 students, 75 of whom belonged to minority groups.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 17 male offenders with a mean age of 38 years.

Indicating criteria for selection or inclusion

Criteria for selecting the subjects were as follows:

Publications were only included in the analysis if

To identify X, the following parameters were used ...

The area of study was chosen for its relatively small ...

Primary inclusion criteria for the X participants were ...

Eligibility criteria required individuals to have received ...

Five individuals were excluded from the study on the basis of ...

A small sample was chosen because of the expected difficulty of obtaining ...

The subjects were selected on the basis of a degree of homogeneity of their ...

A comparison group of 12 male subjects without any history of X was drawn from a pool of ...

Indicating a specific method

X was prepared according to the procedure used by Patel *et al.* (1957).

The synthesis of X was done according to the procedure of Smith (1973).

X was synthesised using the same method that was detailed for Y, using ...

Samples were analysed for X as previously reported by Smith *et al.* (2012).

Analysis was based on the conceptual framework proposed by Smith *et al.* (2002).

This compound was prepared by adapting the procedure used by Zhao *et al.* (1990).

Describing the process: typical verbs in the passive form

The data *were normalised* using ...

Ethical approval *was obtained from* ...

Drugs *were administered by* icv injection ...

Descriptive data *were generated for* all variables.

The procedures of this study *were approved by* ...

Prompts *were used as* an aid to question two so that ...

Data *were collected* using semi-structured interviews in ...

The experiments *were run* using custom software written in...

Two sets of anonymised questionnaires *were completed by* ...

A total of 256 samples *were taken from* 52 boreholes (Figure 11).

The solution *was washed* three times *with* deionized water and ...

Significance levels *were set at* the 1% level using the student t-test.

Data management and analysis *were performed* using SPSS 16.0 (2010).

Published studies *were identified* using a search strategy developed in ...

Data *were gathered* from multiple sources at various time points during ...

Injection solutions *were coded by* a colleague to reduce experimenter bias.

The pilot interviews *were conducted informally by* the trained interviewer ...

Article references *were searched* further for additional relevant publications.

The subjects *were asked to* pay close attention to the characters whenever ...

The experiments *were conducted over* the course of the growing period from ...

Blood samples *were obtained with* consent, from 256 Caucasian male patients ...

Independent tests *were carried out on* the X and Y scores for the four years from ...

This experiment *was repeated under* conditions in which the poor signal/noise ratio was improved.

The mean score for the two trials *was subjected to* multivariate analysis of variance to determine ...

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| The participants were asked | to comment on ... to complete two tasks. whether they believed ... to provide feedback on ... a variety of questions about ... to describe an instance when ... to explain what happened during ... a series of open-ended questions that ... to describe what had happened when ... to complete a 20 question survey about ... |
|-----------------------------|--|

Describing the process: infinitive of purpose

In order to investigate the effects of ...

In order to identify ..., the participants were asked to ...

In order to help familiarise participants with ..., they were asked to ...

In order to address these ethical concerns, the following steps were taken: ...

In order to understand how X regulates Y, a series of transfections was performed.

To avoid ...

To test whether ...

To establish whether ...,

To better understand how ...

To measure X, a question asking ... was used.

To determine whether ..., the cells were incubated for ...

To rule out the possibility that X, the participants were ...

To control for bias, measurements were carried out by another person.

To assess whether and how Xs are produced and received, we measured ...

To see if the two methods gave the same measurement, the data was plotted and ...

To compare the scores three weeks after initial screening, a global ANOVA F-test was used.

To enable the subjects to see the computer screen clearly, the laptop was configured with ...

To increase the reliability of measures, each X was tested twice with a 4-minute break between ...

The vials were capped with X *to prevent* ...

The process was repeated several times *in order to remove* ...

In an attempt *to make each interviewee feel* as comfortable as possible, the interviewer ...

The interview schedule comprised structured and open questions *to identify and explore* ...

Describing the process: other phrases expressing purpose

For the attitude questions, a Likert scale was used.

For the purpose of height measurement, subjects were asked to stand ...

For the purpose of analysis, two segments were extracted from each ...

For the estimation of protein concentration, 100 µL of protein sample was mixed with ...

Describing the process: sequence words and phrases

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>To begin this process, ...</p> <p>The first step in this process was to ...</p> <p>The second method used to identify X involved ...</p> | |
| Prior to | <p>commencing the study, ethical clearance was sought from ...</p> <p>analysing the interview data, the transcripts were checked for ...</p> <p>undertaking the investigation, ethical clearance was obtained from ...</p> <p>data collection, the participants received an explanation of the project.</p> |
| After | <p>‘training’, the participants were told that ...</p> <p>collection, the samples were shipped back to X in ...</p> <p>testing for the presence of antibodies, the blood was ...</p> <p>the appliance was fitted, the patients attended X every four weeks.</p> |
| On | <p>arrival at the clinic, patients were asked to ...</p> <p>completion of X, the process of parameter estimation was carried out.</p> <p>obtaining written informed consent from the patients, a questionnaire was ...</p> |
| Once | <p>the samples were extracted, it was first necessary to ...</p> <p>the Xs were located and marked, a thin clear plastic ruler ...</p> <p>the exposures were completed, the X was removed from the Y and placed in</p> <p>the positions had been decided upon, the Xs were removed from each Y and</p> |
| Following | <p>correction for ..., X was reduced to ...</p> <p>conformational analysis of X, it was necessary to ...</p> <p>administration of X to patients, we assessed the effects on ...</p> <p>this treatment, the samples were recovered and stored overnight at ...</p> |
| <p>The participants were <i>then</i> shown a film individually and were asked to ...</p> <p>The soil was <i>then</i> weighed again, and this weight was recorded as ...</p> <p>These ratings were <i>then</i> made for the ten stimuli to which the subject had been exposed ...</p> <p>The preparation was <i>then</i> placed in a custom-built microfluidics chamber, covered with ...</p> | |
| When | <p>dividing X, care was taken to ...</p> <p>removing X, it was important to ...</p> <p>inviting the participants, the purpose of the research was clearly explained.</p> |
| <p>Finally, questions were asked as to the role of ...</p> <p>In the follow-up phase of the study, participants were asked ...</p> <p>The final stage of the study comprised a semi-structured interview with participants who ...</p> | |

Describing the process: adverbs of manner

The resulting solution was *gently* mixed at room temperature for ...
A sample of the concentrate was then *carefully* injected into ...
The soil was then placed in a furnace and *gradually* heated up to ...
The vials were shaken *manually* to allow the soil to mix well with the water.
The medium was then *aseptically* transferred to a conical flask.
The tubes were *accurately* reweighed to six decimal places using ...

Describing the process: using + instrument

All the work on the computer was carried out *using* ...
Data were collected *using* two high spectral resolution Xs.
Semi-automated genotyping was carried out *using* X software and ...
Using the X-ray and looking at the actual X, it was possible to identify ...
Comparisons between the two groups were made *using* unrelated t-tests
The data were recorded on a digital audio recorder and transcribed *using* a ...
Statistical significance was analysed *using* analysis of variance and t-tests as appropriate..
15 subjects were recruited *using* email advertisements requesting healthy students from ...

Describing the process: statistical procedures

The data *were normalised* using ...
A p value <0.05 *was considered* significant.
Descriptive data *were generated* for all variables.
Reliability *was calculated* using Cronbach's alpha.
All analyses *were carried out* using SPSS, version 20.
Statistical analysis *was performed* using SPSS software (version 20).
Significance levels *were set* at the 1% level using the student t-test.
Data management and analysis *were performed* using SPSS 16.0 (2010).
The mean score for the two trials *was subjected* to multivariate analysis of variance to determine ...

Indicating problems or limitations

In particular, the analysis of X was problematic.
In observational studies, there is a potential for bias from ...
The small size of the dataset meant that it was not possible to ...
Further data collection is required to determine exactly how X affects Y.
Another major source of uncertainty is in the method used to calculate X.
In this investigation there are several sources for error. The main error is ...
It was not possible to investigate the significant relationships of X and Y further because...
The responses relating to X were subjective and were therefore susceptible to recall bias.