

## Chapter 1- Introduction- (1000-1500 words) (Textual Guidance)

An “Introduction” should have the following headers in the specified sequence:

1. **Background of the research**
2. **Problem statement**
3. **Aim of the research**
4. **Research objectives**
5. **Research questions**
6. **Structure of the dissertation**

### 1. Back-ground of the Research:

Begin with presenting necessary background information that justifies your topic to showcase that it is timely and important for research (this can be achieved by providing deserving article references, trending research, etc.)

- **Focus and Scope:** Some critical questions that need answering here are:
  - *Which sector are you focusing on for your study and why?*
  - *What is the background of the sector/industry/company of your study and what are prevalent problems?*
  - *What is the focus of your problem and why is it an important issue?*
  - *What geographic region are you investigating?*
  - *Which period does your research cover?*
  - *What demographics/communities are you targeting for your research?*
- **Relevance and Importance:** Present a brief understanding of the current state of research on your topic and how your research is going to address the gap in the field. A brilliant way to achieve this is by writing down responses to the following set of questions:
  - *Is your research going to solve a practical or a theoretical problem?*
  - *What gap is your research going to address?*
  - *How is your research going to lay its foundation on existing research?*
  - *What new learning or gain is it going to contribute to the understanding of the topic?*

### 2. How to: Write a Problem Statement

A good problem statement explains 5 W's (Who, What, Where, When, and Why) in a systematic way. It should focus only on one problem (a major one) that can be explained in a paragraph at max and no more. It should not suggest recommending a solution.

You may employ 5W's in the following ways:

Who: Mention the affected parties/community/people

What: Specify the problem

Where: Locate the region/place of the problem

When: Give out further details of the problem

Why: Briefly elaborate on the reason for the problem

Example of a Problem Statement:

*The staffing model in the Process Improvement Unit (PIU) has changed (we have more staff, and some of the staff have different working patterns) we need to have a clear way of recording the status and stage of our business activities (projects, workshops, and training) that will be used by all PIU staff so that we can work effectively and provide good service to our customers. A member of staff is due to go on annual leave in two weeks and we have no visibility or way of easily sharing information about their work, this will make it hard for the rest of the team to cover the work during staff absence.*

### 3. Aim of the Research

Here, you are supposed to formulate research questions and objectives that depend on the choice of your topic and the focus of your research. Formulating hypotheses here is a good practice if you intend to do so. The primary focus of your research project is usually expressed in terms of aims and objectives. Hence three important points that must be presented here are:

- Aim of the research (needs brief descriptive explanation)

*“Aim = What you hope to achieve?”*

The aim of your research should be presented as the main purpose of conducting the research. This can be achieved through:

- Adding knowledge to the existing knowledge base
- Filling in the gap in the existing knowledge base
- Devising and testing a solution to an existing problem

It has to be clearly understood that there is only one aim of any research but there can be multiple objectives to it.

*Example: Many academic libraries have expanded their library provision by the acquisition of e-books. Despite this strategic direction, the literature reveals that relatively little is known about student perceptions and attitudes towards e-books. Consequently, this research aims to narrow this research gap and conduct empirical research into student perceptions towards e-books and their frequency of use. The results will be used to provide recommendations to library management to improve the quality of service provision regarding e-books.*

### 3. Research Objectives (1-general objective & 2-3 specific objectives only)

*Objective = the action(s) you will take to achieve the aim*

Objectives are direct and specific statements that define measurable outcomes. Objectives define the what, why, who, when, and how questions.

Examples:

- Objective 1: To review the literature concerning the student uptake and experience of e-books in academic libraries.
- Objective 2: To identify if any improvements or alterations are required to facilitate a high service quality provision in relation to the e-books service at the University library.

Research aims, Research Questions & Research Objectives must be SMART:

S-Specific

M-Measurable

A-Achievable

R-Realistic

T-Time Constrained

### 4. Research Questions (2-3 only)

After choosing a broad topic, focus on a specific area that you want to concentrate in your research and identify a practical/theoretical research problem that you will address. Proceed with formulating one or more questions after you have clearly defined the problem. Your research questions should not be abstract or vague but must be specific.

*Example: What effect does daily use of Twitter have on the attention span of under-16s?*

## 5. Structure of the Dissertation

Briefly describe the flow of your entire dissertation. You may present the logical flow of your dissertation in words without dispersing many details but still touching upon all the headers of the dissertation.

**Finally, do cross-check all the contents of your “Introduction” with this checklist:**

- I have introduced my topic in an engaging way
- I have provided necessary background information about my topic through good references
  - I have specified the focus of my research
  - I have shown the relevance and importance of the research topic
- I have provided a problem statement for my research
- I have clearly stated the aim, objectives & questions that my research addresses
- I have provided flow for the overall structure of Introduction (Review)