



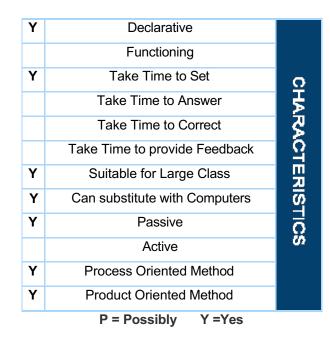
## What is a Literature Review?

A Literature Review is a critical review of existing knowledge on areas such as theories, critiques, methodologies, research findings, assessment and evaluations on a particular topic. It is not simply a summary to gather information from reports, journals and articles. A literature review involves a critical evaluation identifying similarities and differences between existing literatures and the work being undertaken. It reviews what have already been done in the context of a topic. Therefore, on the basis of the existing knowledge, people can build up innovative idea and concept for further research purpose.

### **Structure of a Literature Review**

Generally, a literature review consists of the aim, body, conclusion and references. In some scenarios, a literature review may be integrated into a research proposal. If this is the case, the sections of hypotheses and methods will be included. The sections of aim, hypothesis, and method should be approximately 10% of the length of the literature review.

- Aim: The objective of the study; a short explanation of the study being undertaken
- **Body:** Provide a critical review of the context of the research or project topic; an evaluation and analysis on existing knowledge; the outline of theoretical framework; any areas of controversy; limitations of literatures; reasons and purpose of the study being undertaken
- **Hypothesis:** Assumptions or theories that are going to be tested (This section is for the case when a literature review is integrated into a research proposal)
- **Method:** Approaches for data collection and analysis (This section is for the case when a literature review is integrated into a research proposal)
- Conclusion: A short paragraph to conclude some key points and arguments
- References: The citation and referencing style in the text; the format of the referencing list









- Literature Reviews encourage deep learning, and provide an efficient way to assess students on their knowledge and understanding of a particular topic.
- Literature Reviews assess different cognitive levels.
- With proper supervision and practices, some graduate attributes such as project management and life-long learning can be learnt and assessed.
- Literature Reviews give a conceptual framework for research or project planning because students can have a clear idea of what has already been done in the field. This helps students build up new research topics on the basis of existing literatures.
- Time and cost efficient to look for resources (e.g. through the online database)
- Enhance analytical skills through identifying differences in previous work and their work

### **Disadvantages of Literature Reviews**

- Sometimes, students may not have access to certain information. They may spend unnecessary time and resources on searching for the reviews.
- It is time consuming for the teachers to correct and provide feedback.
- Literature reviews require good supervision from teachers particularly for students who are inexperienced in this type of assessment.

#### How to design a good Literature Review Assessment?

- 1. Ensure the students know the primary objective of literature review
- 2. Ensure the students understand that a literature review is not simply a summary
- 3. Ensure clear assessment criteria and marking scheme, including grammar, spellings and other issues are provided to the students
- 4. Decide the length of a literature review (e.g. 3, 000 words)
- 5. Ensure students understand the meaning of plagiarism and how to reference a piece of text (e.g. the format of citation and paraphrasing)
- 6. Teachers have to decide if they would assess the quality of the resources/literatures chosen by students for the literature review (e.g. Are the literatures chosen sharing a high recognition and authority in the field of study? The validity of the resources?)
- 7. Literature reviews require practice; it is recommended that teachers provide the opportunities. Students may begin with small literature reviews on a narrower topic and build from it. Providing examples will be helpful.







# **Marking Rubrics**

Here is an example of the marking rubrics for Literature Review.

| Marking Rubrics   | Excellent  | Proficient  | Average  | Poor   |
|-------------------|--|---|--|--|
| Aim               | Aim was clearly<br>outlined and<br>comprehensively<br>justified  | Aim was outlined and justified  | Aim was outlined but<br>failed to justify  | Aim was not outlined<br>and justified  |
| Background        | Provided a very<br>comprehensive and<br>detailed background; a<br>wide and deep<br>coverage of the topic   | enough; sufficiently  | A background with<br>basic information;<br>some key points<br>missed; covered the<br>topic at a general level  | Lacked of significant<br>details in the topic  |
| Critical analysis | A comprehensive and<br>critical analysis;<br>applied the existing<br>literatures to support<br>the arguments/ the<br>aim of study; identified<br>the limitations of<br>literatures | Some critical analysis;<br>applied the existing<br>literatures to support<br>some arguments/ the<br>aim of study; showed<br>a few limitations of the<br>literatures | A limited critical<br>analysis; presented<br>the existing literatures<br>in a descriptive way; a<br>limited analysis on the<br>limitations of<br>literatures | No critical analysis;<br>only described some<br>existing literatures; the<br>limitations of<br>literatures were not<br>mentioned |
| Evaluation        | Showed a<br>comprehensive<br>analysis of the<br>similarities and<br>differences between<br>existing work and the<br>student's work   | Showed a basic<br>analysis on the<br>similarities and<br>differences between<br>existing work and the<br>student's work   | Very limited analysis<br>on the similarities and<br>differences between<br>existing work and the<br>student's work   | Failed to analyze the<br>similarities and<br>differences between<br>existing work and the<br>student's work                      |
| References        | Referencing and<br>citation style was<br>correct and consistent<br>between the list and<br>the text; reference list<br>completely concise<br>without errors                        | Referencing and<br>citation style was<br>consistent between<br>the text and the list;<br>reference list with only<br>a few minor mistakes                           | Some references were<br>inconsistent between<br>the text and the list;<br>reference list with<br>some mistakes   | Many references were<br>inconsistent between<br>the text and the list; a<br>number of mistakes in<br>the reference list          |

### Web Reference and Resources

- The Literature Review: A few tips on conducting it, The University of Toronto. http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/specific-types-of-writing/literature-review
- Write a Literature Review, University Library, University of UC Santa Cruz http://library.ucsc.edu/help/howto/write-a-literature-review
- Literature Review, The University of Hong Kong Libraries https://libguides.lib.hku.hk/c.php?g=917467&p=6846481







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