Writing the Significance of a Study

The significance of a study is its importance. It refers to the contribution(s) to and [impact](https://www.cwauthors.com/article/impact-factor-versus-impact-of-research) of the study on a research field. The significance also signals who benefits from the research findings and how.

Purpose of writing the significance of a study

A study’s significance should spark the interest of the reader. Researchers will be able to appreciate your work better when they understand the relevance and its (potential) impact. Examiners also assess the significance of the work, which will influence the decision made on the dissertation.

Sections in which the significance of the study is written

Introduction

In the [Introduction](https://www.cwauthors.com/article/How-to-write-an-introduction-to-an-academic-article) of your paper, the significance appears where you talk about the potential importance and impact of the study. It should flow naturally from the [problem](https://www.cwauthors.com/article/how-to-write-the-statement-of-a-problem), aims and objectives, and [rationale](https://www.cwauthors.com/article/how-to-write-the-rationale-for-your-research).

Conclusion

The significance is described in more detail in the concluding paragraph(s) of the [Discussion](https://www.cwauthors.com/article/how-to-write-an-effective-discussion-section-in-a-scientific-paper) or the dedicated [Conclusions](https://www.cwauthors.com/article/how-to-write-the-conclusion-section-of-a-scientific-article) section. Here, you put the findings into perspective and outline the contributions of the findings in terms of [implications](https://www.cwauthors.com/article/difference-between-implications-and-recommendations-in-a-research-paper) and applications.

Abstract

The significance may or may not appear in the [abstract](https://www.cwauthors.com/article/how-to-write-an-abstract). When it does, it is written in the concluding lines of the abstract.

Significance vs. other introductory elements of your dissertation

In the Introduction…

* The [problem statement](https://www.cwauthors.com/article/how-to-write-the-statement-of-a-problem) outlines the concern that needs to be addressed.
* The research aim describes the purpose of the study.
* The [objectives](https://www.cwauthors.com/article/developing-and-framing-research-objectives) indicate how that aim will be achieved.
* The significance tells the reader how the findings affect the topic/broad field. In other words, the significance is about how much the findings matter.

How to write the significance of the study

A good significance statement may be written in different ways. The approach to writing it also depends on the study area. In the arts and humanities, the significance statement might be longer and more descriptive. In applied sciences, it might be more direct.

a. Suggested sequence for writing the significance statement

1. Think of the [gaps](https://www.cwauthors.com/article/how-to-identify-gaps-in-research-and-determine-your-original-research-topic) your study is setting out to address.
2. Look at your research from general and specific angles in terms of its (potential) contribution.
3. Once you have these points ready, start writing them, connecting them to your study as a whole.

b. Some ways to begin your statement(s) of significance

Here are some opening lines to build on:

* *The particular significance of this study lies in the…*
* *We argue that this study moves the field forward because…*
* *This study makes some important contributions to…*
* *Our findings deepen the current understanding about…*

c. Don’ts of writing a significance statement

* Don’t make it too long.
* Don’t repeat any information that has been presented in other sections.
* Don’t overstate or exaggerate the importance; it should match your actual findings.

Example of significance of a study

Note the significance statements highlighted in the following fictional study.

Significance in the Introduction

*The effects of Miyawaki forests on local biodiversity in urban housing complexes remain poorly understood. No formal studies on negative impacts on insect activity, populations or diversity have been undertaken thus far. In this study, we compared the effects that Miyawaki forests in urban dwellings have on local pollinator activity. The findings of this study will help improve the design of this afforestation technique in a way that balances local fauna, particularly pollinators, which are highly sensitive to microclimatic changes.*

Significance in the Conclusion

*[…] The findings provide valuable insights for guiding and informing Miyawaki afforestation in urban dwellings. We demonstrate that urban planning and landscaping policies need to consider potential declines.*