Academic Writing

Part 2
Your Assignment Headings

- Abstract
- Introduction
- Literature Review
- Conclusions
- References
Structure: Abstract

An effective abstract summarizes the major aspects of the entire paper in a prescribed sequence that includes:

1) the overall purpose of the study and the research problem(s) you investigated;
2) the basic design of the study;
3) major findings or trends found as a result of your analysis;
4) a brief summary of your interpretations and conclusions.

The abstract allows you to elaborate upon each major aspect of the paper and helps readers decide whether they want to read the rest of the paper.
Your Abstract

Your abstract will summarize the major aspects/concepts of your chosen lecture topic in 50 words.

1) The briefest of statements of what “exactly” the topic is; Then, a clever rewording of the entire paper inside 50 words…
2) Introduction
3) Literature Review
4) Conclusions

The Abstract helps readers decide whether they want to read the paper. **The Abstract is ALWAYS written last.** You don’t know what the paper is about until you’ve written it!
Structure: Introduction

An effective introduction discusses the meaningfulness of the chosen topic. It also gives a clear insight into your intentions. Thus the introduction presents a background and statement of context for your investigation. Your introduction should include these items in some form:

• Clear Statement…Purpose…Definitions (if necessary)

Your introduction should:

• Set the context and capture the reader's interest.
• Explain the background of your research topic.
• Cite relevant references (if required).
Structure: Literature Review

The literature review develops broad ideas of what is already known in a field, and what questions are still unanswered.

You must show that you have looked through the literature and have found the latest updates and most relevant materials in your field of study.

A discussion of the present understanding and/or state of knowledge concerning the problem or issue should be included in your essay.
Finally conclude and discuss possible future research.
Discuss how your research plan provided a method for exploring research.

Remember to include References
- References are not counted in the word count
- References should be UL Harvard Style
- References should be in an alphabetical list (by author name) as per UL referencing guidelines, and **not** an ‘order of appearance’ or other type of list
Referencing Software

You can automatically create citations and bibliographies in your Word documents when using EndNote with Word. EndNote assists you to do this via a number of additional commands that are available within Word when EndNote is installed. This tutorial will guide you through the process of setting up Endnote...

https://libguides.ul.ie/referencing-endnote

Alternatively, you can use Zotero or Mendeley if you wish
Using Google Scholar

Sustainability? ...we get 4,500,000 results...

- **Sustainability science**
  - RW Kates, WC Clark, R Corell, JM Hall ... , 2001 - science.sciencemag.org
  - Meeting fundamental human needs while preserving Earth’s life support systems will require an accelerated transition toward sustainability. A new field of sustainability science is emerging that seeks to understand the fundamental character of interactions between nature ... [HTML] sciencemag.org

- **Book**: The ecology of commerce: A declaration of sustainability
  - P Hawken, K Shah - 1993 - pdfs.semanticscholar.org
Using Google Scholar

But, Sustainable Interaction Design? …we get 3,270,000 results
Also, the author E. Blevis is coming up a lot.
Choreographing Obsolescence – Ecodesign: the Pleasure/Dissatisfaction Cycle


ASSESSMENT: A comprehensive explanation of built-in obsolescence & choreographed obsolescence, and how certain types of goods, such as musical instruments, are often exempt from these patterns.

QUOTES:
- “The control of pleasure was directly linked to the control of dissatisfaction and it became increasingly difficult to separate out the ‘natural’ physical decline of products over time, from the ‘contrived’ dissatisfaction deliberately and often collectively engendered by manufacturers”
- “In tandem with physical decline, two other factors: technological and fashion cycles, play an equally important part in the perception of decline.”
- “Built-in obsolescence was usually a default strategy in which reduced material and production costs resulted in less durable individual products. In contrast, choreographed obsolescence ensures that the life of products is governed by their position within a company/sector innovation cycle, rather than resulting from the vagaries of product durability.”
- “It is equally possible that the group of products deemed ‘close to body’ such as furniture and clothing, or those that require an investment of skill and time, such as cars, musical instruments and computers, share a common characteristic - that long-term pleasure may override the negative effects of declining ‘newness’.”
- “The ‘old armchair’, ‘faithful’ walking stick and ‘trusty’ waterproof jacket, enjoy a degree of perceived maturity which is not just tolerated but actively celebrated.”
What follows is a 483 word excerpt, with a total of 16 references...
Sustainable Interaction Design

David Suzuki said that “sustainability means doing things better – not doing without” (Boyd 2004). As every major assessment regarding the Earth’s resources has concluded that we are “eating into natural capital, rather than living off its interest” (Jucker 2002), then without doing better, we may soon have to do without. For years, researchers and practitioners in Sustainable Interaction Design have attempted to reverse resource consumption trends by focusing on the individual (Petkov et al. 2012, Pierce and Paulos 2012) and attempting to change their behaviour. While millions of individuals making small, positive changes would be obviously significant, achieving this has proved problematic as, “people don’t use energy, they use products, which use energy” (Holmes 2007). The lack of a sustainable solution is partially because of the researcher’s mind set, seduced by Modernism, as they strive to find simple technical solutions to complex social problems (Brynjarsdottir et al. 2012, Heslop et al. 1981). The arresting finding that “raised awareness and increased knowledge do not automatically lead to more sustainable behaviour” (Jucker 2002) reiterates the problem, but without suggesting a straightforward solution.

(cont’d…)
Sustainable Interaction Design

Other pertinent issues compound the struggle for Sustainable Interaction Designers. This is despite having the moral high ground, fighting against ingrained economic policies such as Neoliberalism, which prioritises economic prosperity over ideals such as equality or social justice and then defends this position by arguing that market forces will ensure “the greatest good for the greatest number of people” (Dourish 2010, Harvey 2005). An example of how this political outlook exerts an influence is the throwaway culture we live in, where people buy smartphones and portable media players “with the expectation that they will be replaced within a period of a few years” (Huang and Truong 2008). This is despite quantifiable evidence that people have predictable attitudes toward their varied possessions and that these very same attitudes could potentially form the foundation for profound changes in sustainable behaviour (Barba 2008, Huang and Truong 2008, Odom et al. 2009). Commercial entities wilfully ignore this evidence and continue with “choreographed obsolescence”, an intentional strategy that ensures product life-span is “governed by their position within a company/sector innovation cycle, rather than resulting from the vagaries of product durability” (Woolley 2003). This ensures that their bottom line always trumps any other considerations (Hanks et al. 2008). That sustainability can be “more than just recycling” and become “a cultural paradigm shift away from technology novelty and induced consumption, toward an aesthetic of well-cared-for systems” (Blevis 2007) remains an aspiration for now, and will remain so while designers are “complicit in the unsustainability of current interactive products” (DiSalvo et al. 2010).


References


The Annotated Bibliography

I cannot stress enough the importance of maintaining an annotated bibliography, or the importance of having back ups of all your files

An annotated bibliography minimises the amount of re-reading you will need to do.

Instead of re-reading a paper, you can read your notes to identify the most interesting and important bits, as well as useful quotes.

If you insert the references for each paper as demonstrated in the previous slides then you will not have to manually do it at any other point… referencing software can be wrong!
One last time - Your Assignment Headings (!!)

- Abstract
- Introduction
- Literature Review
- Conclusions
- References
Marking Scheme

Research - 4%: Selection & Identification of relevant primary/secondary sources

Structure - 2%: Logical organisation of material for your articulation of argument

Analysis - 6%: Ability to generate a clear point of view, while using and citing sources

Presentation - 3%:
• Use of relevant, labelled and good quality images and diagrams where relevant
• Adherence to essay writing guidelines and academic conventions
• Correct Referencing style

PENALTIES:
For each spelling error: -1%
For each 50 words above or below target: -1%
Each missing/incorrect assignment heading: -1%
Examples: 549 word report = No Penalty; 550 word report = -1%; 550 word report with 3 spelling errors = -4%. 
FAQ

Q: What’s the word count?
A: 500, + or - 10%, so strictly between 451 and 549 words *excluding references and headings*. Anything more or less than this will be penalised at -1% per 50 words.

Q: What topic are we writing it on?
A: The topic is your choice, but it must be something I (or Alan, or Gabriela) have covered in lectures.

Q: How many references do we need?
A: Approximately 3 - 5 good sources is all you will need. Ensure they are reliable sources (i.e. NOT wikipedia).
FAQ

Q: Where do we submit it?
A: You must submit either a PDF or Word Document on SULIS by 5pm Friday 22nd November - if you do not meet the deadline you will need to provide a medical cert.

Q: What if I miss the deadline but don’t have a cert?
A: As outlined on the module wiki from week 1, you MUST pass ALL assignments to pass this module. Failure to submit + no reason = failing the assignment, and therefore the module. This is the case for all assignments in this module.