

Scientific writing (for distance learning)

All of us know the feeling of sitting in front of a “blank paper” or an empty page on the computer screen. In this guide, you will find information, tips and, overall, links for suitable resources online, for example for writing a paper or an essay. The essay is a freer form of an academic text and is based on both facts and your own thoughts.

1. Writing a paper or an essay

- ❖ Writing is much more than conveying information; it trains and develops your thinking and your way of expressing yourself. Writing is also one of the best ways of learning to master content and to communicate. There are many ways of producing a text, but not all of them give equally good results.

- ❖ When writing, you as a student need to take the following steps
 - Think about the theme for the paper; write a title
 - Who is your target audience?
 - When you begin writing: start by formulating a question or questions that you want to answer. Your teacher might also have given you a theory, which you can use as a starting point.
 - Collect data
 - Discuss with your supervisor and fellow students
 - Sort the data
 - Delimit the topic: on what are you going to concentrate?

- Plan the structure and create an outline (inform your supervisor and course leader about your preliminary title and content and let them know if you change the title)
- Writing: Modify the text & read through it, literature citations
- Contact the teacher yourself for individual instruction
- Publish

[Libguides](#) - start here!

When you start writing your paper or essay, a good place to start is [visiting the page Libguides](#). Libguides are subject guides compiled by the campus librarians at Åbo Akademi University Library in Åbo/Turku and Vasa/Vaasa. Here you can find tips for literature, as well as search tips specifically for your subject.

Enter the Libguides page, choose your faculty, then your subject and – voilà, you find many resources to help you. In the guide, you will find an overview of how to find books, journals, articles and databases, theses, dictionaries, as well as good tips on writing and writing reports. Please note that the English pages are partially more limited than the Swedish pages.

2. Citation, referencing and plagiarism

Citation and writing abstracts

A citation is an exact representation of what someone has said or written, whereas an abstract means writing about for example a text in other wording/your own words. Regardless of whether it is a citation or an abstract, you will need to refer to the source of origin. For example, the libraries of Blekinge Institute of Technology and Linnaeus University [explain in their guide](#) how to cite and how to avoid plagiarism.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism means "borrowing" someone else's work without permission and pretending that it is our own.

Examples of plagiarism:

- Using a text/picture without referring to the one who created it.
- Translating word for word from another language.
- Using someone else's text and only changing for example a few synonyms.

You can find more information about plagiarism for example in the guide "[Keys to Studies](#)" on page 45 onwards.

In the [ÅAU Examination and Assessment Instructions](#) you can find rules concerning the management of cheating and directives for managing plagiarism.

[Behind the following link, you will find a video](#) in three parts, explaining how to write correctly and avoid plagiarism. Johanna Bäckström at the Language Centre at ÅAU has produced the video in collaboration with Tritonia's EduLab.

References- why, when and how?

One part of proper academic custom, is to state the sources your text is based on. This way, the reader is informed of whose texts and of ideas you base your work on, as well as how to find the source and/or a specific text. Read more about citing [in the guide](#) made by the libraries of Blekinge Institute of Technology and Linnaeus University.


3. Copyright and Creative Commons

- The copyright of a picture, a text, a piece of music or another creation is generated automatically when the piece is created.
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- Unauthorized usage of material online is tempting and done by many, often because of thoughtlessness or because they are unaware of it not being permitted.

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- You can [use advanced search in Google](#) when looking for example for pictures.
- The own [search engine of Creative Commons](#).

GOOD LUCK WRITING YOUR PAPERS AND ESSAYS!