



Short guide

A Short Guide to Literature Review

Prepared by: The Center team **Language:** English **Axis:** Research basics

Abstract

This short guide explains how to plan a literature search, read sources critically, record them systematically and synthesise them into a review that clarifies where a new study fits.

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- 2 Searching systematically
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- 4 Organising the synthesis

1. Purpose of a review

A literature review maps what is already known about a topic, shows where studies agree or disagree, and identifies the gap that a new study can address. It is a synthesis, not a list of summaries.

2. Searching systematically

Begin with clear keywords and their alternatives, search several databases, and keep a log of queries and dates. Record each source with its full reference immediately so that it can be cited accurately later.

3. Reading critically

For each source ask what question it addressed, which method it used, what it found and what its limits are. Brief structured notes make comparison between sources far easier.

4. Organising the synthesis

Group sources by theme, debate or method rather than by author. Each paragraph should make a point supported by several sources and then link to the next point.

Key points

- ◆ Log every search you run
- ◆ Take structured notes per source
- ◆ Organise by theme, not by author
- ◆ End by stating the gap

Note: this file is an illustrative sample prepared by the Center team to demonstrate the reference library. The team will replace it with the real reference. It contains no quotations or references attributed to named authors.