



Part 1 is the INTRODUCTION

**Don't mess around in it!
 Simply introduce the research.**

Outline the problem

State the aim

Outline your approach to achieve the aim

Part 2 is the BACKGROUND

needed before you describe own research e.g.

brief historical overview

if case study, a chapter describing study area & characteristics;

a chapter reviewing current theory and practice

Part 3 is a report on your OWN WORK

Contains design of experiments

Surveys/reviews to test hypothesis

Results of the work

Analysis of the work showing trends, associations, correlations etc.

Part 4 is the SYNTHESIS

Develops your contrib. to knowledge,

Understanding of the topic

Contains a discussion where you examine your results & comparing your results with others'

Conclusion

As the thesis has a structure, so does each chapter.

INDIVIDUAL CHAPTERS

You need to answer the following questions so the reader clearly understands:

- 1. Why is this chapter here?**
- 2. What is its function in the thesis**

Chapter Format

- 1. Have a formal 'introduction' for each chapter**
- 2. This is followed by the chapter contents**
- 3. Ending with a formal 'conclusion'.**

Chapter Introduction

Three paragraphs:

first – link back to earlier parts of thesis, esp. previous chap. To make it obvious why the chapter is needed.

second – state the aim of the chapter, what function does it have in the thesis.

third – outline how you intend to achieve the aim. ‘Table of contents’ format often used.

Chapter Conclusion

A paragraph that shd. respond to stated aim or purpose of the chapter.

Exception wd. be for descriptive chapters e.g. characteristics of study area.

Problem Areas

Students have most difficulty with the conclusion – they struggle with the question, “so what?”

They write summaries of the chapter’s content.

A summary shd. state what you found, whereas a conclusion states the significance of what you found.

A conclusion responds to the stated purpose of the chapter, whereas a summary is just a potted version of what is in the chapter.

1.2 Processing a Thesis

Word *style* – texts, captions, headings, titles, indents, font, size, colour, etc.

Spell-check, grammar-check

References

Tables

Figures

Table of contents

1.3 Presentation of a Thesis

Often poor format design (font, pitch, etc.) indicates poor structure.

Same is true for writing style - turgid writing is a great barrier to understanding.

Good grammar and spelling are not optional extras.

The 95 per cent syndrome

Don't assume your examiner knows 95 per cent of what you've learnt and that you have to discuss only the 5 per cent you believe is new and challenging.

WRITING THE THESIS –

a generic outline

The material should be logically organised. There is prescribed format but the following approach should fit most cases:

Preliminaries

⇒ *Title page*

⇒ *Abstract* Summarise what has been done and the manner in which it has been done. Summarise the main conclusions that have been drawn from the work.

⇒ *Declaration* – unique

⇒ *Dedication*

⇒ *Acknowledgements*

⇒ *Table of Contents*

⇒ *List of Tables*

⇒ *List of Figures*

Chapter 1. *Introduction*

Chapter 2. *Literature Review*

Chapter 3. *The Background Chapter*

Chapter 4. *Research Methodology*

Chapter 5. *Research Results*

Chapter 6. *Discussion of Results*

Chapter 7. *Conclusion*

Bibliography

Appendices

Chapter 1.
Introduction

The shortest but most important chapter of your thesis!

It must be an uncluttered and lead reader to very, very clear understanding what you are attempting.

Brief but interesting!

The chapter must include:

- **A brief *problem statement* - not a review of theory or literature but the reason it's worth researching (read examples)**
- **The *aim* of the research. three characteristics**
 1. **It's a logical consequence of the problem statement i.e. outline a problem; your aim is to solve it.**
 2. **Singular!**
 3. **Conclusions in final chapter must respond to this aim**
- **Set out the research *objectives*.**

- **The *research approach* –follows logically from the aim. Slightly expanded form of table of contents written in sentences to show logical flow to reader.**
- **The *importance of the research***
- ***Limitations of research***
- ***Key assumptions***
- **The *contribution to knowledge***
- **Brief *layout of thesis* by mentioning what will be done in subsequent chapters.**

Chapter 2.

Literature Review

Theoretical foundations of the study. A structured account of the theory current at the time you do your work.

Critically review the literature.

What a Literature Review is NOT...

- A literature review is not a list of articles with a paragraph written about each one.
- A literature review is not a gratuitous listing of every article you've ever seen or heard of.
- A literature review is not something you do after your research just before you hand in your thesis.

What a Literature Review IS...

It's a story about the state of the literature as you find it and how your particular piece of research will fit into it.

Sources of Literature

- Primary sources
 - Journal articles
 - Conference proceedings
 - Reports
 - Government publications
- Secondary sources
 - Monographs
 - Textbooks
- Tertiary sources
 - Handbooks
 - Bibliographies
 - Encyclopedias
 - Journal of Economic Literature

Chapter 3.
Background Chapter

This is usually descriptive material to locate study areas in space, time, culture, etc.

Test for including material: Exclude all material that is not needed to understand what will follow.

Don't include text in the main body of the thesis if it interrupts the development of your logic – consider an appendix.

Chapter 4.
Research Methodology¹¹

The examiner's job is to pass you if you can demonstrate you know what you are doing – and fail you if you don't.

Your description of how you intend conducting your investigation is often where this virtue or failing is most obvious.

Give a comprehensive account of the research method and the techniques that will be employed.

¹¹ The dictionary shows that 'methodology' is the study of method. It would be more accurate to refer to the 'Research Method' but convention seems to make 'methodology' acceptable.

If appropriate, give particular attention to:

the sample used, measuring instruments, and statistical analysis to be undertaken.

Study or case study? i.e. to study something in its own right or as a case study from which you can draw generalizations.

Differing structures for individual report vs. case study.

Study of Victoria Hill alone	Victoria Hill as a case study
Title: Managing the Victoria Hill Mine Site.	Title: The Mining Heritage Landscape: Our Cultural Past, Present and Future.
Aim: To develop a management plan for the Victoria Hill mine site in Bendigo.	Aim: To develop principles for managing worked-out mine sites close to urban areas.
Background: Describe Victoria Hill mine site. Review legislation and land-use controls, specifically as they apply to Victoria Hill.	Background: Review legislation and land-use controls. Review present practice in Australia and elsewhere on rehabilitation of disturbed landscapes. Review theory of industrial heritage.

Chapter 5.

Research Results

Describe and interpret results without referring to other studies yet. The idea is to *inform* the reader.

You should record and file all your data in a systematic way if needed, include enough in an appendix to show reader how it looked, how you treated it to add to the results chapter

Chapter 6.

Discussion of Results

Discuss outcome of the study with reference to other research and underlying theoretical framework.

A helpful technique to develop a tentative structure for the chapter:

Write down all the things you know now that you didn't know at the start of your research (one sentence for each item). Large/small ideas, snippets, insights. Do it with your supervisor or a colleague that knows your work.

Sort into groups of associated ideas.

Give a heading for each group – these will be section headings in the discussion chapter.

Chapter 7.

Conclusion

In chapter one you stated the aim of the research, these conclusions *must* spell out how you fulfilled that aim.

They must also *clearly* flow from or be drawn from the discussion chapter.

Conclusions should be concise – it may be only four pages long.

Make recommendations and suggest areas of further research.

Bibliography: adopt appropriate convention as early as possible e.g. Abridged Harvard.

Appendices: self-supporting work, stand-alone.