**How do I write a good introduction?**

Most of the types of texts/assignments you write for university need to have an introduction, to show the reader clearly what the topic or purpose of the whole paper is. As a rough guide, an introduction might be between 10% and 20% of the length of the whole paper.

An introduction is usually one paragraph with **3 main stages**:

* It begins with the *most general* information, like background and/or definitions.
* The middle is the *core* of the introduction, where you show the overall topic, purpose, your point of view, hypotheses and/or research questions (depending on what kind of paper it is).
* Finally, the introduction ends with the *most specific* information: a guide to the scope and structure of your paper. This is often a list (e.g. “The issue will be considered in terms of *economics, politics and culture*”), or a plural (e.g. “This issue will be discussed with reference to *three important economic causes*.”).

Note: If the main body of your paper follows a predictable template, like the Method, Results and Discussion stages of a report in the sciences, you often do *not* need to include a guide to the structure in the introduction.

It is sensible to write your introduction **after** you know both your overall *point of view* (if it is a persuasive paper) and the *whole structure* of your paper. Alternatively, you should revise the introduction when you have completed the main body.