

What are the typical 'ingredients' of a conclusion?

Trzeciak and Mackay (1994) (*Study skills for academic writing*. New York: Prentice Hall) observe a number of useful "ingredients" that form part of a conclusion. Again (as with introductions) it will not always be necessary or desirable to include all the elements they mention. However, you will probably want to use some of these in some combination, in order to conclude your work.

- A **summary** of the main part of the text
- A **deduction** made on the basis of the main body
- Your **personal opinion** on what has been discussed
- A statement about the **limitations** of the work
- A **comment about the future** based on what has been discussed
- The **implications** of the work for future research
- Important **facts and figures** not mentioned in the main body

Pallant (2009) sees five basic ingredients of a conclusion as follows, though these will not always be used in the same conclusion:

- A **summary** of the main points (being careful not to repeat exactly what you have written before)
- **Concluding statements**
- **Recommendations**
- **Predictions**
- **Solutions**

Further advice on writing conclusions

When writing an assignment, be careful of the following points:

- Keep in mind the **balance** of your assignment. The conclusion should be clear and relatively brief.
- There is **no need to go over everything again** that you have already mentioned; this would be unnecessarily boring and tedious.
- Make sure that **the conclusion is based on what you have said before**. It is often tempting to go off at a tangent and to say things that are completely unrelated to the topic. Be wary of this.
- It is **permissible to give your opinion in the conclusion** but try to do so subtly. Usually your viewpoint will be obvious from your discussion, so there is no need to conclude with statements such as: In conclusion, I think Hamlet is a great play. Allow your enthusiasm for the topic to show in how you discuss it.
- Be very careful about using the word "conclusion" anywhere other than the conclusion itself! This can mislead the reader. If you use the word conclusion several times in an essay, the reader will give up trying to work out where the conclusion really is.