



Structuring Your Proposal & Citing Correctly

Welcome to Week 7 of our course, where we'll explore how to effectively structure your research proposal and implement proper Harvard referencing. This presentation will guide you through the essential components of a well-crafted proposal and provide you with valuable tools for accurate citation.

Research Proposal Structure

Introduction

Provide context for your research topic, establish its significance, and clearly state your research question.

Aim & Objectives

Define your primary research aim and break it down into specific, measurable objectives that will guide your investigation.

Literature Review

Analyze existing research, identify gaps in knowledge, and position your study within the broader academic conversation.

Methodology

Detail your research approach, data collection methods, and analytical techniques with clear justification.

Ethics

Address potential ethical concerns and outline how you'll ensure your research adheres to ethical standards.

Crafting Your Introduction

Key Components

- Background context of your research area
- Clear statement of the research problem
- Significance and relevance of your study
- Brief overview of your approach
- Concise presentation of your research question



Your introduction should capture attention while establishing the foundation for your entire proposal. Aim for approximately 300-400 words that clearly frame your research.



Developing Aim, Objectives & Literature Review

1 Research Aim

A single, clear statement of your overall research purpose (50-75 words)

2 Research Objectives

Specific, measurable steps that will help achieve your aim (100-150 words)

3 Literature Review

Critical analysis of existing research, identifying themes, debates, and gaps (800-1000 words)

- Organize by themes rather than individual sources
- Demonstrate how your research addresses identified gaps

Methodology & Ethics

Methodology (600-800 words)

- Research approach (qualitative, quantitative, mixed)
- Data collection methods with justification
- Sampling strategy and participant selection
- Analytical techniques and tools
- Limitations and how you'll address them

Ethics (200-300 words)

- Informed consent procedures
- Data protection and confidentiality
- Potential risks to participants
- Ethical approval process
- Data storage and management

Common Writing Pitfalls to Avoid



Vague Research Questions

Ensure your research question is specific, focused, and answerable within your word count and timeframe.



Descriptive Literature Review

Avoid simply summarizing sources. Instead, critically analyze and synthesize existing research to identify gaps.



Unjustified Methods

Always explain why your chosen methods are appropriate for addressing your research question.



Inconsistent Referencing

Maintain consistent Harvard referencing format throughout your proposal, both in-text and in your bibliography.



Harvard Referencing Guide

In-Text Citations

- Single author: (Smith, 2020)
- Two authors: (Smith & Jones, 2020)
- Three+ authors: (Smith et al., 2020)
- Direct quote: (Smith, 2020, p.45)
- Multiple sources: (Smith, 2020; Jones, 2019)

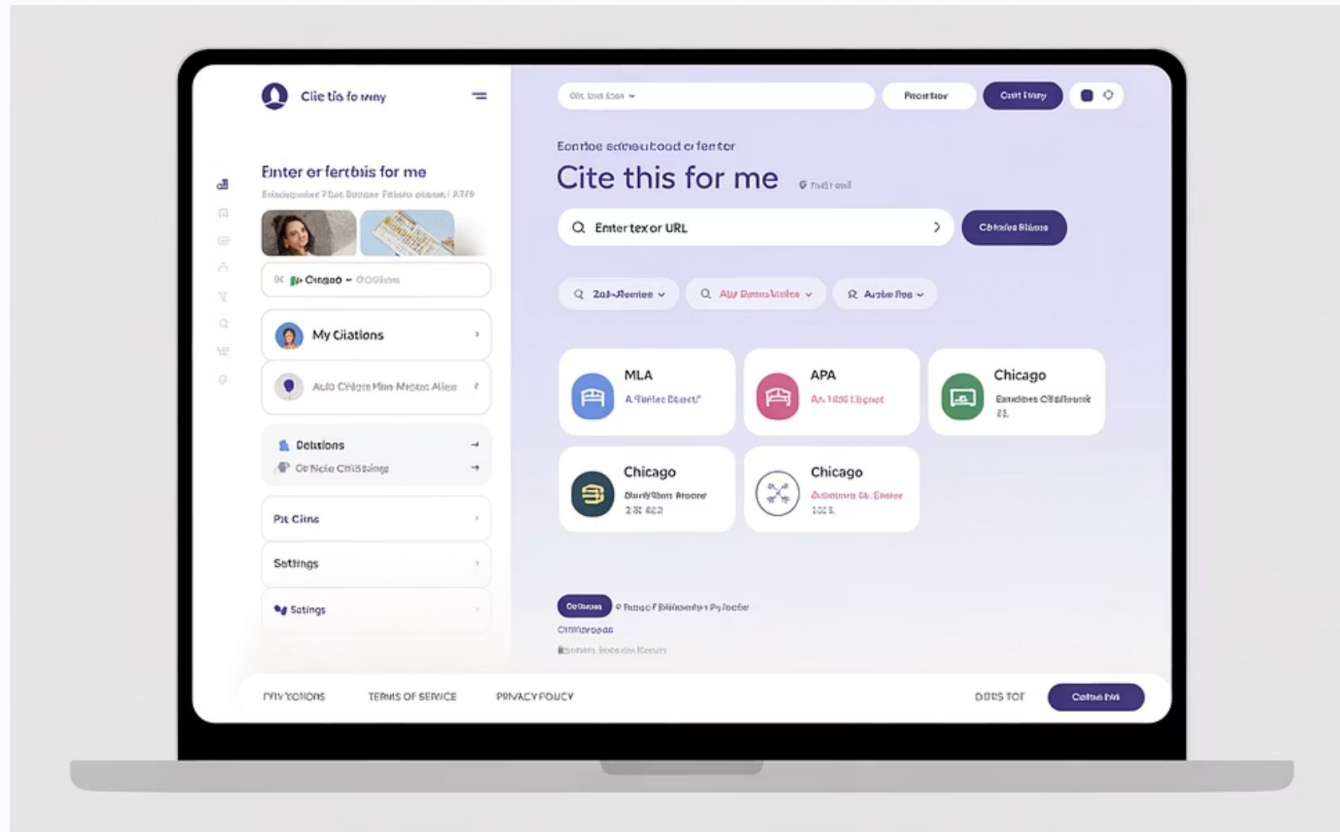
Bibliography Format

Book: Author, A. (Year) *Title*. Place: Publisher.

Journal: Author, A. (Year) 'Title', *Journal*, Volume(Issue), pp.xx-xx.

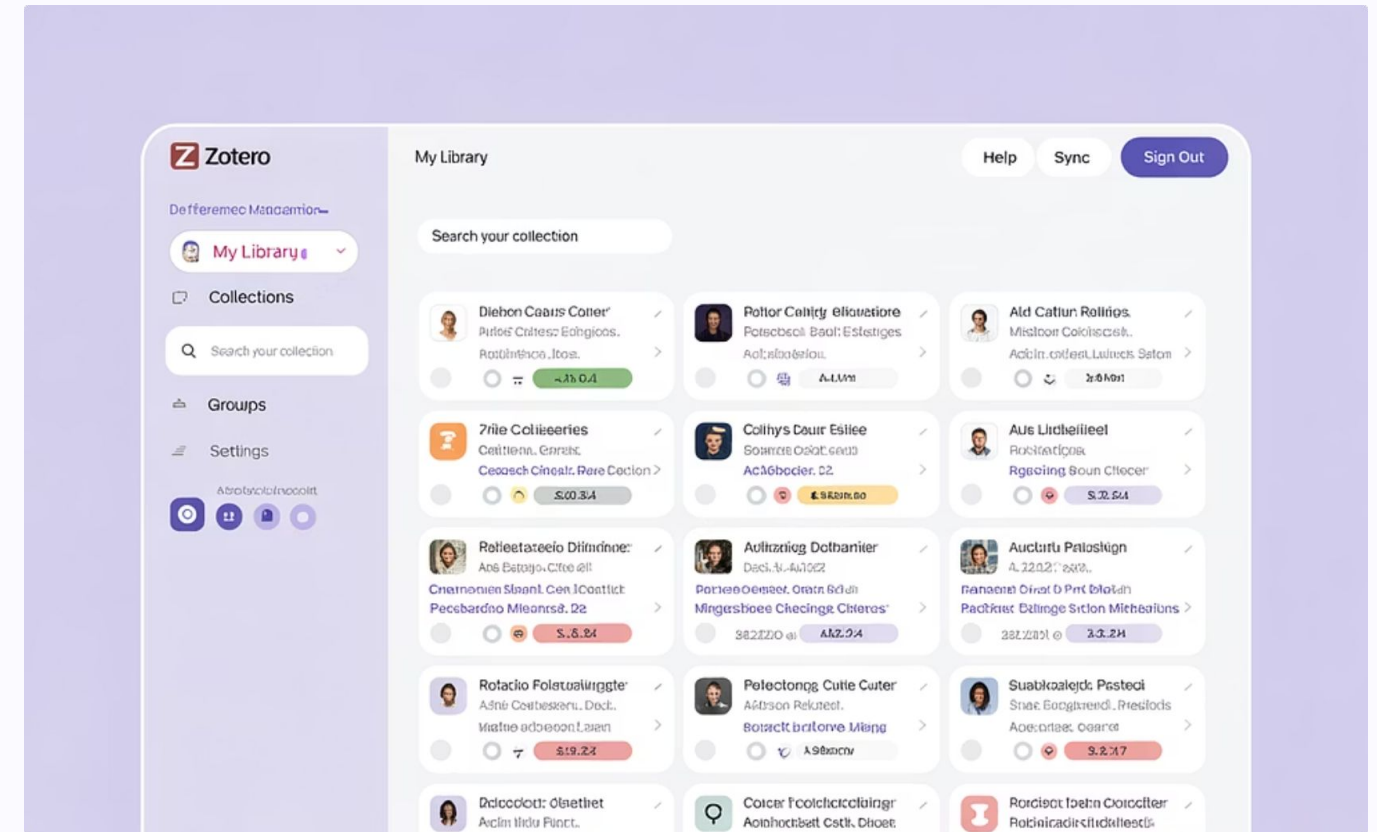
Website: Author (Year) *Title*. Available at: URL (Accessed: date).

Referencing Tools



CiteThisForMe

Web-based citation generator with Harvard style option. Easy to use but verify outputs against style guide.



Zotero

Free reference management software that collects, organizes, and formats citations. Integrates with word processors.