



Advice – Writing of the Thesis summary (“Kappa”)

Editorial Committee, Dept Soil & Environment

There are no precise rules on how to write a thesis but we have a few recommendations. Take advantage of the greater freedom you have compared to the writing of a manuscript intended for publication in an international scientific journal.

Scope and content

The thesis summary (Swedish: *kappa*) should present the background, objectives, hypotheses and discuss the implications of the results, illustrated with a selection of your results. Avoid writing a thesis summary that is unnecessarily lengthy and dutifully reports everything you did. Although you need to write about your methods and include some tables and figures from the manuscripts, avoid repeating the full methodological descriptions and every aspect of the results from the papers; the interested reader should be referred to these instead. Remember to bring the different parts together in an overall synthesis about what your work means for science or in practice! Do the manuscripts taken together provide new knowledge that is not apparent from the individual manuscripts?

Checklist

- The title should correspond to the content, be concise and raise interest to read further.
- Abstract: Summarize the objectives, what you did (no details), your principal results, what is new and why it matters – the take-home message.
- Purpose and objective clearly presented
- Hypotheses should be testable. Remember to refer to the hypotheses in the discussion.
- Background with key references
- Chosen approach logical and well presented
- New findings highlighted
- Limitations/implications of results discussed
- Changes in practice or techniques recommended
- Principal conclusions clear and logical
- Take home message

Technical issues and common mistakes

- Use the SLU template for PhD theses.
- The thesis should be linguistically checked before submitted to the Editorial board.

- All material should be reviewed by *Ouriginal*. This is the responsibility of the main supervisor.
- *The text should be your own and not consist of extensive copying from the manuscripts included in the thesis. To include text from other researchers work without proper references is plagiarism.*
- Clear structure and headings, illustrative tables and figures, references.
- Check that you have the permission to reproduce figures/illustrations with copyright holders.
- Figures and tables should be self-comprehensive, placed at the top or bottom of a page, after being mentioned in the text.
- Tables: Check how to insert decimal tabs in your word processor and use them! Decimal point over decimal point; first decimal over first decimal.
- Avoid using the word ‘we’ for instance in a sentence like ‘we discovered that *a* was better than *b*’. Use passive form or write instead ‘I’. You are the sole author of the thesis.
- Reported differences, effects etc. should be statistically significant. You do not have to write ‘the treatments differed significantly’. Simply write ‘the treatments differed’. If they did not differ significantly, they did not differ at all, provided you use and rely on the tools of statistics.
- Check the meaning of ‘parameters’ and ‘variables’ and use the words correctly.
- Be aware about the difference between colon (:) and semicolon (;).
- The reference list should be consistent and according to the style in the template.

Congratulations, almost there!

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