

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

GUIDELINES FOR ABSTRACTS FOR PhD THESES

GENERAL

The Doctoral Degrees Board recommends that candidates include an abstract that fits onto one page, and which includes the author's full name, thesis title and date. The text should not exceed 350 words. Candidates may also include a more substantial summary of their work, in addition to the abstract.

The abstract should stand on its own.

THE ABSTRACT SHOULD ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. What did the author do? What ideas, notions, hypotheses, concepts, theories or thoughts were investigated?
2. How did the author do the work? What data were generated and used? What was the origin of the data? How were data gathered? What tests, scales, indices, or summary measures were used? In other words, how was the analysis and/or synthesis done?
3. What were the conclusions and what were the significant findings?

Some studies cannot readily be summarised in this way and require more descriptive abstracts.

Do not use telegraphic phrases. Do not repeat information given in the title. Do not use abbreviations.

The purpose of an abstract is to enable a researcher/examiner to understand the essential hypothesis, method and findings of the research.