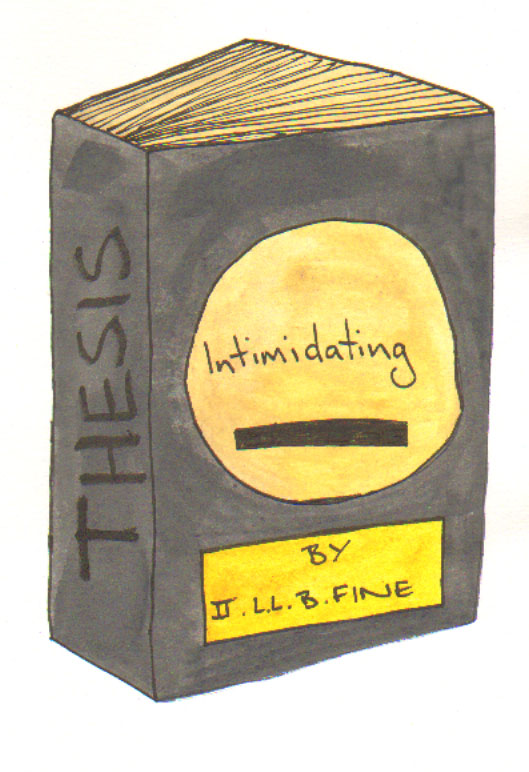
# How to write a Literature Review



## What Is A Literature Review?

**A literature review is an evaluative critique of the body of literature on a particular topic. It brings the reader up to date on the range of ideas and knowledge that have been established on a topic, identifying contrasting and opposing views as well identifying any gaps in the current knowledge.**

### Step One: Identify topic

**You may be given a topic or asked to choose a topic of your own. If you choose your own topic, ensure that there is enough relevant literature to include for you to write a literature review.**

### Step Two: Find Relevant Texts

**You may be given a number of books or articles to review or you may be expected to conduct this research yourself as part of the exercise. Identify databases that are recommended for your subject by your subject librarian. (**[**Debora@cct.ie**](mailto:Debora@cct.ie) **is our librarian). Undertake keyword searches to find relevant books and articles. Evaluate your results. Scan read them to decide which you want to include as part of your literature review. Select a suitable number of studies depending on the length of literature review you are expected to write.**

### Step Three: Analyse the studies

**Consider the following:**

**Analyse author credentials**

**Identify the purpose of the study: what does the study claim to prove?**

**Is the claim adequately supported by the evidence provided?**

**Is the study carried out using qualitative or quantitative research or both?**

**Are there any flaws in the study?**

**If there is a focus group is it representative of the population under study?**

**Is there evidence of bias?**

**Is there evidence of validity/invalidity? For example, if you find you are doubting the accuracy of something presented, you are entitled to state this.**

### Step Four: Writing the Review

**Plan to organise the review either chronologically, thematically or methodologically. If arranging your review thematically, try to identify themes or issues that link your sources together as you read through the literature. If you have essentially only one theme, this makes it a little easier for you.**

**Most literature reviews, like essays, have an introduction, a main body and a conclusion.**

**Introduction: the introduction should be clear and short (300 words approximately for CA2), providing an overview of the research topic, your reasons for writing the review, an explanation of the scope of the review, what it is you intend and do not intend including, as well as the sequence or order of the review.**

**Body of text: the body of the text summarises and synthesises the literature. You should summarise and synthesise material in a way that allows you not only to report, but also to compare, contrast, critically review and perhaps comment on what has been said in the literature.**

**Conclusion: in the conclusion you provide a summary of your findings on the topic as well as identifying the gaps.**

**Based on the likelihood that the number of academic sources being available for your topic may be limited due to the newness of the topic, we are expanding the reference sources (from one source) to include:**

* **Reference materials/books (ie traditional source)**
* **Evidence based articles in scholarly peer reviewed journals (sometimes informally called “papers”)**
* **Podcasts/relevant social media sources**
* **Conference proceedings and papers**
* **Trade publications/Annual reports**
* **Dissertations**
* **Suitable grey materials**

**(Note lecture notes are not suitable for a Literature Review)**

**For your CAs in the R and PE module, you are expected to provide:**

1. **CA1 – N/a**
2. **CA2 – Minimum of 30 valid sources**

**Finally, writing a LR is a skill in itself which we are not expecting you to master overnight. What we are looking for in R and PE is your understanding of the structure, the components and your ability to critique the commentary.**