

Annotated bibliography script

Script

Have you been asked to write an annotated bibliography? If you are new to university, you may be new to annotated bibliographies.

This video will:

- introduce you to annotated bibliographies
- compare annotated bibliographies and literature reviews
- show you how to structure your annotations

All scholars refer to the work of other scholars in their writing. They are participating in a type of academic conversation that helps to build knowledge. As a student, you also participate in this conversation by referencing the experts in your assignments. Writing an annotated bibliography develops your ability to do this.

So, why would your lecturer ask you to write an annotated bibliography?

Well, annotated bibliographies are common assessment tasks at university because they help YOU.

They help you ~~to~~ learn to:

- review the literature ~~of~~on a topic
- improve your reading skills
- show your understanding of published work
- think through issues
- summarise ideas for later assignments
- evaluate the quality of research
- determine the relevance of a source for your own research

Each of these skills is the foundation for other assignments you may do, such as research essays or literature reviews.

So, what is an annotated bibliography? Put simply, an annotated bibliography is like a list.

At the end of your university assignments, you know you are required to include a reference list - or bibliography – that includes the published work that you refer to in your writing.

Well, an annotated bibliography is like that, but after each reference, you need to write an annotation – or in other words – a short description and...or an evaluation of the reference.

Let's turn now to the annotations in your annotated bibliography.

Like all university assignments, annotated bibliographies can vary. So, it is very important that you read your task instructions and make sure you understand your lecturer's requirements.

Annotations comprise two or three elements.

First, each annotation begins with the source's full bibliographic information. Make sure you use the referencing style required by your lecturer!

Second, your annotation should summarise the source. This may include

- an introduction to the text (that is...topic, genre, aim and/or scope)
- the main arguments or key ideas

OR

- the research methods, findings or main conclusions.

Finally, most – but not all – tasks require you to comment on the text. When you do this, you may

- evaluate the strengths and limitations
- outline the contribution of the text to the field

AND...OR

- describe the relevance or usefulness of the text for your purpose

Many students ask us how annotated bibliographies are different to literature reviews or essays.

Think of annotated bibliographies as a list and the other two as cohesive texts.

Occasionally, you may be asked to write an introduction or a conclusion for an annotated bibliography, but the *main aim* is to create a list of sources in alphabetical order. Each source is separate and appears only once.

Essays and literature reviews are a cohesive whole. That is, they always have an introduction and conclusion. Sources are synthesised into body paragraphs that are organised to meet a goal, like building an argument. Sources may be referred to multiple times and they appear in a reference list at the end.

Lecturers assign annotated bibliographies because they develop multiple skills and familiarise you with important sources in your field. So, a well-written annotated bibliography can set you up for later success.

This video has provided an overview of annotated bibliographies. Work through the materials to develop your knowledge further and build the language you need.

Don't forget to speak to a Language and Learning Advisor if you need more help.