

# Sage Research Methods Data and Research Literacy: How-to Guide

Authors: **Please complete the white fields below.** Direct any questions to your editorial contact.

<b>Title.</b>		<i>How to Present Answers to Your Research Questions: The Fourth Stage of The Social Research Toolbox, QGAP</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Maximum of 20 words.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>All principal words capitalized.</i></li> </ul>		
<b>Authors.</b>		Please specify the total number of authors:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>The order of authorship in the publication will follow the order below.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Please add additional rows for co-authors if necessary.</i></li> </ul>		<b>1</b>
1	Name	Dr Katy Wheeler
	Author email	Katy.wheeler@essex.ac.uk
	Affiliation, country	University of Essex, Department of Sociology & Criminology
	SAGE Author ID	[office use only]
Author biography.		[Maximum of 200 words]
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2	Name	
	Author email	[Insert contact email]
	Affiliation, country	[Insert institution and country]
	SAGE Author ID	[office use only]
Author biography.		Dr Katy Wheeler is a Senior Lecturer in Sociology at The University of Essex. Her research interests are in the fields of sustainability and consumption, and she has published widely within leading academic journals and two authored monographs, <i>Fair-Trade and the Citizen-Consumer: Shopping for Justice?</i> (Palgrave: 2012) and <i>Recycling and Consumption Work: Social and moral economies</i> (Palgrave: 2015). She has also co-authored the textbook <i>How to do Qualitative Interviewing</i> (SAGE, 2022 – with Morgan Brett). She has taught social science methodology courses for many years (both qualitative and quantitative), from introductory undergraduate to advanced postgraduate.
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3	Name	
	Author email	[Insert contact email]
	Affiliation, country	[Insert institution and country]

	SAGE Author ID	[office use only]
Author biography.		[Maximum of 200 words]
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For which <b>student level</b> is this guide most suitable?		<b>Introductory Undergraduate</b>
<b>Methodology categorization</b>		<b>Other / Not Applicable</b>
Discipline		Guides should be <b>cross-disciplinary</b> . If the content of your guide is specific to a discipline(s), please let your editorial contact know.
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*Sage Research Methods: Data and Research Literacy* is an educational resource which will equip undergraduate and postgraduate students and researchers with the tools to **understand and critically evaluate research methods and methodologies, manage and interpret data, and conduct robust social research with integrity** and confidence.

Guides will be **authoritative and accessible** resources which **combine research principles with research practise**, incorporating practical and ethical considerations, to help prepare students and researchers for working with data, evaluating research, and conducting their own research.

When writing your guide, we recommend using **real-world research examples** to keep the reader engaged. You may choose to use one consistent example throughout the guide, or multiple examples.

Each how-to guide is limited to **4000 words**, with a 10% leeway. For topics which require more than 4000 words there may be the option to write multiple guides; please raise this with your editorial contact if required. Guides may include direction to further resources through which the reader can explore each topic in more depth.

You can view two how-to guides from previously published collections here:

- From [Diversifying and Decolonizing Research](#)
- From [Doing Research Online](#)

Please ensure you have read the **manuscript guidelines** before you begin writing your guide.

SRM requires the disclosure of any **AI-generated content** in your work. Please read our full policy [here](#) and notify your editorial contact if you have any questions, or if you need to disclose use of generative AI in your work.

References should conform to American Psychological Association (APA) style, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, and should contain the digital object identifier (DOI) where available. Sage will not accept guides that are incorrectly referenced; please ensure accuracy before submission. For help on reference styling see <https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines>.

## Abstract

The abstract should be a concise summary of your how-to guide. What aspect of the research process, working with data, or specific methodological and practical challenges will your guide address? It should be succinct and enticing, and should incorporate key words and concepts discussed in the body of the text. Please do not cite references within the abstract.

[Insert here: Maximum of 250 words]

*Once you have gathered data, examined the evidence and undertaken a systematic analysis, it is time to present your findings or your answers to your research question(s). In this guide, we consider the last stage in the social research toolbox, or QGAP, series. We first discuss some of the motivations for publishing or writing up your work and how to get started with the writing process. The guide then explores some of the conventions around how to present qualitative and quantitative findings, focusing on 'academic voice' and how to make data accessible and informative for your reader through tables, graphs, quotations and typologies. Then particular attention is paid to the types of information about the process of research that ought to be communicated to enable audiences to make a judgement about the credibility of your research claims. This guide therefore is not only useful to those writing up research but also those wishing to appraise the research claims of others.*

## Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes must explain what the reader will learn from reading your guide. How will the reader be able to apply what they have learned to their own research practice?

Consider what the **most important aspects of this topic** are. Bear in mind the guide is limited to 4000 words. **The content and structure of your guide should explicitly correspond with these learning outcomes.**

See the links below for guidance on writing effective learning outcomes:

- [Writing learning outcomes](#)

- [Blooms Taxonomy Action Verbs](#)

Insert 3–5 learning outcomes, **beginning with an action verb**, completing this statement:

**Having read this guide, readers should be able to . . .**

- Recognise the importance of presenting research findings once data and evidence have been gathered and analysed.
- Identify appropriate strategies for communicating qualitative and quantitative data.
- Understand what information research audiences require to appraise the credibility of research claims.

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## Introduction

Build on the abstract to further describe what methodological issues will be discussed in this guide; what the student reader will gain from reading the guide; how the guide will be structured; which real-life research examples will be drawn upon, etc. You may wish to begin with a brief positionality statement.

This guide forms part of the social research toolbox or, QGAP, series, which offers a simple way of conceptualising the research process. You can learn about QGAP by watching this short animation [hyperlink to be added once available], and instructors can download some teaching PowerPoints that support the series here [hyperlink to be added]. Within the toolbox, there are four stages; 1) Questions, 2) Gathering data and evidence, 3) Analysing the data and evidence and 4) Presenting your answers to your research questions. The four stages occur in all social research projects (whether qualitative, quantitative or mixed-method), and though they have been presented in a linear way for teaching purposes, the reality is that each stage is shaped by the others, and it is usual to move between stages at different points of the research journey, depending upon the type of research you are doing.

In this guide, the focus is on the ‘Presenting’ stage of the social research toolbox. Once you have gathered (G) and analysed (A) your data /evidence to address your research question (Q), it is time to present the findings (P). This can feel like a daunting stage of the process but effectively communicating your answers to your research question[s] is essential if others are to learn about your research and build upon it in future studies. How you present these findings will depend on the context you are working within – for example, a student dissertation will be quite different to an academic journal article, and so too to policy research reports and conference presentations. We consider some of the conventions around presenting research and how best to display qualitative and quantitative data to effectively communicate your findings. For all types of research output, it will be important to explain the steps and

processes which led to the conclusions presented. Whilst you may have definitive answers to your original research question, it may also be the case that new questions emerge from your research. In this way, the presenting stage relies on all the previous stages in the toolbox and may also be the catalyst to start the process again.

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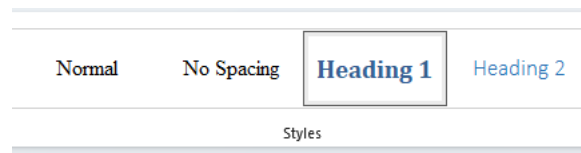
## Main Body of Text

Write the body of your guide below. The text should be between **2,000 - 4,000 words**.

We encourage the use of **headings** and sub-headings to **structure your guide into sections**.

We recommend using **800 words or fewer for each section**.

For section headings please use Word Style 'Heading 1'. For any sub-headings within sections use Word Style 'Heading 2'. To use Word styles in Microsoft Word, select the text you want to format, click the "Home" tab and then use the "Styles" pane.



Every section must be followed by a **Section Summary**.

Each Section Summary should consist of 3-5 bullet points, written out as full sentences, which summarize the key information in the section.

## Why you should present your research findings

It is only by writing up or presenting your research findings that anyone will know about your research. You may have conducted the most innovative or interesting study, but if you are unable to tell your audience about its significance, then the research will not be read, it will not add to an evidence base and it will not be built upon by others. As researchers we do have a duty to communicate research findings, especially if someone has funded us to undertake the research or has given up their time to participate in a research study. It is arguably one of the most important stages of the research process, but it is often the stage we struggle with most. Presenting research can help us - in terms of achieving a qualification or prestige – and it can also help those whose lives our research has documented by offering evidence-backed recommendations for policy and practice change.

By the time you reach the stage of presenting your findings, you should have engaged with all the previous stages of the social research toolbox. Your research question (Q) will have driven the collection (G) and analysis (A) of various forms of data and evidence and now is the time write up or present what you have found and why it is important. I find students are often unsure about the presentation stage and how best to condense the many hours of work that have led to this point. Part of the problem is that we often think of writing up research as the final stage, which places a lot of pressure on this point and ignores the role that writing

should have played throughout the research journey. Writing is thinking and it is not a good idea to leave all your thinking to the last stage of the process! I have advocated throughout this guide series about the importance of writing down key decisions and findings along the way in your personal research journal or diary (more on this below). Notes to yourself in your research journal and discussions with supervisors and colleagues about your work may be different than formally writing for an audience. But if you have documented and verbalised your process along the way, you will be in a strong position to start developing outputs. It is completely normal for your writing to travel through multiple drafts before it is ready for submission.

The first thing to think about is why you want to communicate your findings and who the audience is. For research conducted at university for a student dissertation, presenting findings will be partly driven by a need to pass your degree. The audience for your dissertation will be academics who are familiar with research and its conventions. A public talk with a non-specialist audience will be quite different and care will need to be taken to avoid too much jargon and to communicate findings straightforwardly. This is different again to research that has been commissioned by an organisation who want research findings to be presented in a way that might inform future practice and have less interest in the theoretical framing of your findings. I recently led an evaluation of a Holiday Hunger programme (free meals for low-income children in the school holidays) and the funder wanted quite specific insights into programme improvement rather than a theoretical account of social inequality and social capital. Though the latter informed my approach to data gathering, the submitted report was focused on recommendations for service delivery improvement. Ask yourself what will your audience expect to see in your presentation and what parts of your research findings will be most appropriate for this audience? The context you are operating within matters, and it is likely you will have different versions of your research for different audiences.

The traditional format for presenting social science research is displayed in Table 1, and follows the structure of introduction, literature review, methods, findings, discussion and conclusion which can be seen in many academic outputs. Though other outputs like blogs or presentations will follow slightly different conventions, such as using visual aids, presenting conclusions in the opening lines/slides, and using hyperlinked references. The best way to familiarise yourself with the required format is to look at published works or repositories of previous student work (which many institutions will keep). An academic librarian at your institution would be a good place to start to find examples of previous works (both published and un-published)

Table 1: Contents of most academic dissertations, reports or articles

<b>Section</b>	<b>Key points to communicate</b>
Introduction	The rationale for your research question and what your research hopes to achieve
Literature review	Previous published research around your research question, highlighting the gap in existing evidence and the need for your research.
Methods	What was your research design (method, sample, time period)? Were there any limitations with its application?

Findings	What did you find out? Use text, tables, charts, graphs and quotations to provide evidence for your claims.
Discussion	How do your findings address your research question(s)? How do you interpret these findings in relation to previous published evidence? (please note in qualitative papers, it is common to see Findings and Discussion sections combined)
Conclusion	What are the implications of your research? What recommendations do you make as a result? What further research still needs to be conducted?
References	A list of sources you have directly cited using a consistent referencing style

In terms of how to start writing up or presenting your findings, there is no better time to start than now! You may find it helpful to write a short bullet point summary of the different headings you want to cover and make some notes as a springboard to get you started. I have found that free-writing has been very helpful when I have struggled to get my thoughts down – the idea of free-writing is that you set yourself a timer (maybe 15 minutes) and you write everything down that you can in that time without an expectation that anyone will see what has been written. You can repeat the process several times in one sitting or make a daily practice of writing – for ‘the precondition for writing well is being able to write badly and to write when you are not in the mood’ (Elbow, cited in Wolcott, 2009, p. 45).

### Section Summary

- *Effectively communicating research findings is essential for ensuring that your research is known about, read by, and built upon by others.*
- *Writing should not only happen at the presentation stage of the social research toolbox, but it should also be an ongoing activity throughout the research journey to formulate and crystallise ideas.*
  - *Tailor your research findings to different audiences to ensure you convey key messages and recommendations in a format that is appropriate to their expectations.*
  - *If you are struggling with this stage, use strategies like bulleted lists and free-writing to help get you started.*

## Conventions when presenting qualitative and quantitative data

Whilst Table 1 reveals the standard format for academic outputs, the way that quantitative and qualitative projects are presented does differ because of the nature of the data that needs to be displayed. In this section, I will briefly overview some of the key conventions when reporting research findings based on qualitative or quantitative data, including what voice or narrative point of view to describe your findings from, the use of hypotheses, and how to display numerical and textual qualitative data.

### Voice

Often students ask whether they can write their essays and assignments in the first person, using ‘I’. Different academics have different expectations around the use of the first person in formal writing (so if you are a student, you should check your institutional guidelines). As

someone who mostly works with qualitative data, I tend to tell my students that I am happy for them to use 'I'. In qualitative projects, the researcher/student is often the person who has gathered the research data and analysed it and so it makes sense to connect the discussion of findings with the person who has made these insights. It is common to see statements about the positionality of the researcher in qualitative reports – such as their socio-demographic characteristics, experiences and assumptions that have shaped the data and findings. On the other hand, in quantitative reports, it is rare to see findings discussed in the first person and generally a third person, passive voice is preferred. For example, if a researcher had performed a t-test, this would not be reported as 'I carried out a T-test' but instead 'a T-test was conducted by the researcher'. Quantitative reports strive for a more objective and formal tone in line with conventions of scientific reporting. In mixed-method projects, decisions need to be made about how to navigate between these conventions – for example, it might be a good idea to talk in the third person consistently throughout rather than alternating between the two in the same report. Or alternatively, data from different paradigms might be discussed separately before findings are synthesised later on. The choice will depend upon the purpose of the report, discipline conventions and expectations of its audience.

### Hypothesis or research question?

If you have quantitative data which has been analysed using statistical tests, it may be that a research hypothesis (or series of hypotheses) is a more appropriate way to discuss your research question or objectives. A research hypothesis is a testable statement about the relationship between variables and it/they should have been developed from your research question. Because of the nature of inferential statistics, the widespread use of significance testing (the probability that there is no relationship between your variables), and the tendency for quantitative research to test theories about relationships between variables, it often makes sense to state which hypotheses the research report will specifically explore. As we saw in the first guide, research questions do tend to be more rigid in quantitative studies than in qualitative studies (Wheeler, 2025a), and using hypotheses in quantitative outputs will make it clear to the reader what the purpose of that output is. On the other hand, hypotheses are inappropriate when reporting qualitative findings and you should use research question instead.

### Displaying numerical data in tables and figures

It is common to present numerical findings through tables and figures (e.g. graphs and diagrams). If you are using any of these, you must make sure they have clear titles, are appropriately labelled with headings and are placed close to where they are discussed within the text so that a reader can match your written description to the visual display of evidence. Never leave a table or figure to speak for itself – it is your job as the author to draw attention to the significant findings and explain why they are relevant to the reader. Be sure not to over-use tables and figures and remember that the goal of visually displaying numerical data is to enhance understanding and aid interpretation. When deciding whether to include a table or figure in the main body of your text or in the appendix consider its direct relevance to your argument. Key data that supports your main findings should remain central, whereas supplementary or very detailed information (like extensive raw data) is better placed in the appendix to avoid without disrupting the flow of your argument. In a classic article on the pitfalls of displaying quantitative evidence, Wainer (1984) highlights how researchers can obscure (unintentionally) the meaning of their data through showing limited data,



manipulating the scale within a graph, poor labelling and ignoring conventions. He concludes his ‘12 rules for displaying data badly’ by suggesting researchers look to work of others to learn how to communicate quantitative data effectively.

### Displaying qualitative data effectively

Data gathered through interviews, open-ended survey questions or documents can run into thousands of words. The challenge when writing up this data is how much to show the reader, balancing between description and interpretation. Often verbatim quotations or extracts from documents are used to help the reader judge the fit between the data and the researcher’s interpretation of it. Researchers use quotations or extracts to offer evidence for their claims, to give participants’ voice and so add authenticity to their reports, and to display diversity or nuances between participants/cases. Together this can enhance the readability of your reports and deepen the understanding of the reader. However, a long list of quotations which are not discussed can become boring for a reader. As with quantitative tables and figures, quotations should not be left to speak for themselves and should be used illustratively or analytically to develop key points. In addition to deciding which quotations to include, researchers must also consider how to organize supplementary materials to support their analysis. In qualitative research, the appendix can be used to provide supplementary material that aids transparency and replicability, such as coding schemes, category frameworks, or sample excerpts of analysed text. Handling transcripts is another important consideration—researchers/students should critically reflect on whether to include anonymized transcripts in their publications or dissertations, as this practice varies across fields and may depend on ethical considerations, or journal requirements or assessment criteria.

Another way to effectively present qualitative data is by grouping responses into typologies. Sometimes groups of responses can be reported together through typologies which emphasise features that certain groups of participants or cases share, and describe how these features contrast with other typologies, within your sample. For instance, in my field of work, it is common to see sustainable consumers described as either ‘deep green’ (highly committed to sustainable practices) or ‘light green’ (moderately committed to sustainable practices). Typologies can offer a way of displaying diversity with a few select quotations or thick descriptions, rather than having to present lots of textual data. In general, quantification of qualitative data (including quasi-numeric terms like some, a lot or most) should be avoided because the sampling for qualitative projects is purposive rather than probability and so claims cannot be generalised to broader populations. The exception is qualitative content analysis where some quantification is appropriate but must be handled with care so as not to claim representativeness (Schreier, 2012). There are some good guides for writing up qualitative data which describe how quotations can be used, how to display diversity and how to handle (if appropriate) or avoid quantification (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Schreier, 2012; White et al., 2014; Wolcott, 2009). But learning from published work and previous examples is really the best way to develop your skills in presenting answers to qualitative research questions.

### Section Summary

- *Quantitative data is best presented using third-person passive voice, hypotheses, and numerical data in tables and figures, while qualitative data should use first-person voice, research questions, and select quotations or typologies.*
- *Do not leave data to speak for itself – all data selected for inclusion in written reports or other outputs need to be explained to the audience by drawing attention to its key features and how these support the claims of the author.*

- *To learn how to present data effectively, I recommend looking to previously published work/examples to see how others manage things like displaying quantitative data in tables and graphs, and using quotations to communicate nuances within qualitative samples.*

## What do you need to present to enable others to critically appraise your work?

Regardless of the type of data you have, your presentation of findings needs to be persuasive and authoritative. You need to convince the reader that your interpretation of the data and evidence gathered and analysed is appropriate. This involves giving the reader sufficient information about the research process, the instruments of data collection and the limitations of your approach. It is important to place your knowledge claims in context. You may remember in the second guide in this series, the PROMPT framework (OU, 2020) was introduced when we talked about reviewing a range of sources and determining their credibility (Wheeler, 2025b). This framework encourages the reader to evaluate each source by assessing how clearly the information is presented, who has authored the piece and why, whether the research methods used were appropriate, and whether limitations in the methodology were made clear. It is worth bearing these points in mind when writing-up research as key elements that need to be communicated.

I have suggested at several points in this series that you should keep a research journal to document key decisions made throughout the research journey. This is partly about helping you to stay in control of your project and to better understand your data and its interpretations along the way, but it is also an important part of demonstrating the credibility of your research process. Quality criteria in social research are often discussed under the headings of reliability (consistency of findings over time or between researchers) and validity (whether we have measured/described what we intended to and how accurate these measurements/descriptions are) (Clark et al., 2021). These terms were originally developed within a positivist epistemology which strives for objectivity in its processes and replicability of findings across different contexts. There is some dispute about how far these terms apply within an interpretivist or constructivist epistemology, where multiple contexts and researcher positionality (e.g. researcher's unique biography) shape what can be seen and interpreted (Guba, & Lincoln, 1994; Noble & Smith, 2015; Seale, 2010). In quantitative research designs, standardised research instruments are employed, and much scrutiny can and does happen before data is gathered. Whereas in qualitative research designs, the instrument of data collection is often the researcher themselves, which makes strict application of reliability and validity hard to achieve. Whilst for some researchers, it is possible to adapt the meaning of reliability and validity for qualitative research (Seale, 2010), others suggest alternative criteria is needed, such as credibility (which can be enhanced by sharing findings with participants and using multiple data sources and perspectives) and transferability (providing thick descriptions to allow judgments about applicability) (Guba, & Lincoln, 1994). In both scenarios, it is important to document key decisions and processes undertaken with particular attention to any biases which might be shaping the data gathering and interpretations. This is where a research journal is crucial and will become your best friend when you are writing up your research. Notes made in this journal can help you to provide an account of what you did, why you did it, the problems or events that shaped the process and a thick description of the research context. Though reflexive research journals are not normally advocated for in quantitative designs (as research findings are rarely reported from the perspective of the researcher), it makes sense to keep detailed notes of processes undertaken,

coding of variables and analytical techniques undertaken. My suggestions for the sorts of information to put into your research journal are listed in checklist below.

*Checklist of things to include in your research journal:*

- Research question/Hypothesis and how you arrived at this?
- Rationale for the study
- Literature and evidence consulted and how this influenced the research project
- Which theories and existing approaches are related to the research question
- Research design choices and why these were made (including ethical considerations)
- Sampling of participants, cases, documents, including thick descriptive of context if needed.
- Method and tools for data collection and how they were designed
- QUANT: Whether research instruments came from existing protocols and whether they were adapted
- QUAL: Researcher assumptions and biases before, during and after data collection and how these have shaped data gathered and interpretations drawn
- Any deviations from the protocol or any strange occurrences and your reflections on these
- How data was cleaned and categorised and why
- QUANT: Which statistical tests were undertaken, why and any unexpected results
- QUAL: Your ongoing interpretations of the categorised data, including nuances between and within cases
- How software was used to uncover and illustrate the comparisons between categories in your data
- How you explain the findings and what the implications of your study are
- Limitations of the study
- What questions remain unanswered or need further research?

By making good notes throughout your research journey, you will be in a strong position to communicate your findings in a transparent way by documenting the decision trail that led to your conclusions. If you are reading a research report or engaging with a research source, ask yourself if the claims made by the researcher are sufficiently documented. Whilst space is always limited in research reports, you should feel that most of the points in the checklist above have been addressed when deciding whether to trust this source.

It may be that if you have communicated your findings convincingly that your research will be taken up by others and/or applied in practice. You may also feel that once you have presented your findings to your original research question that there are further questions that need to be addressed in future research projects. By communicating the unanswered questions and qualifying research claims alongside limitations, you open the door to the social research process circling again through Questions, Gathering, Analysis and Presentation.

## Section Summary

- *When presenting answers to your research question[s], you need to write persuasively and authoritatively, offering evidence for why your conclusions and recommendations are credible.*
- *Detailed information about the research process, data collection instruments, and study limitations need to be provided to readers and it is a good idea to keep records of these things throughout the research journey.*
- *Though the criteria for the validity and reliability of your research will vary depending on epistemology of your project, a research journal that records your decision trail is recommended as a tool to document relevant information that will need to be communicated to readers when writing up.*

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## Conclusion

Includes a **summary of the key lessons** discussed within each section of your guide.

What can readers learn from this guide and apply when conducting their own research and evaluating the research of others?

In this final guide in the social research toolbox, or QGAP, series we have considered how to present answers to your research question[s]. Unless you can communicate your research findings effectively, it is unlikely that your research will be graded highly (if you are a student) or read by and built upon by peers (if you are an academic) or used to inform a policy or practice (for commissioned research). Writing up research in the form of reports, presentations or blogs is often one of the hardest stages of the social research toolbox, but as this guide has stressed, it is important for personal, professional and ethical reasons. Writing up often feels daunting because it is where conclusions are drawn and recommendations are made but this pressure can be lessened through regular writing about your research, data gathering and analysis as an ongoing process throughout the research journey. This guide (and others before it) advocated for meticulous record keeping in the form of a research journal or diary where important and reflexive notes can be made about what you have done, why you have done it this way and how this has shaped the data and findings you created. This research journal can then form the basis of the description of your methodology in your presentations and outputs. It serves as an important decision trail which can improve the transparency and credibility of your research when presenting it to others. The guide also explored some of the conventions around the reporting of quantitative and qualitative data and how to write persuasively, using visual aids and quotations as evidence for your key claims. When evaluating the research of others, you should consider how far authors have contextualised their research claims, using evidence and description of the processes that have led to this evidence being created. One of the best ways to learn how to present research is to read and listen to examples from your field.

As you reach the final stage of the social research toolbox, it is important to remember that though all four stages occur in all research projects - 1) Questions, 2) Gathering data and evidence, 3) Analysing the data and evidence and 4) Presenting your answers to your research questions – they do not always happen in a linear way. By the time you are presenting your answers, you may also be generating new research questions and so starting the cycle again, or perhaps you will return to your data much like a secondary re-user and ask different questions of it. Research is a messy business, and it is normal for the stages to interlink and shape one another. A good write-up or presentation of research should describe all four stages, detailing how they were developed in practice, acknowledging potential biases or limitations in protocols or processes and alerting the reader to any contextual information which ought to be taken into account when judging the credibility of the research claims made.

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## Multiple Choice Quiz Questions

Multiple Choice Quiz Questions should:

- Test readers' understanding of your guide.
- Focus on relevant aspects of data and research literacy.
- Not require any information that is not included in this guide.

Multiple Choice Quiz Questions should not:

- Include 'all of the above' or 'none of the above' options, or implausible responses.
- Require information not included in the guide.

Example:

1. *What is critical reflexivity?*

a. *An understanding of how a researcher relates to and actively engages with the complex contexts and dynamics within which the research is embedded. [CORRECT]*

b. *An understanding of how over-researched populations can experience research fatigue when directly engaged by researchers.*

c. *An understanding of anonymity and confidentiality in research.*

Guidance for writing MCQs can be accessed using these links:

- [\*Tips for writing effective multiple-choice questions\*](#)
- [\*The process of writing a multiple-choice question\*](#)

[Insert three to five multiple choice quiz questions below. **Each MCQ must have three possible answers (A, B, or C), with one correct answer.** Please indicate the correct answer by writing [CORRECT] after the relevant answer.]

1. Why is it important to present your research findings after you have gathered and analysed your data?
  - a) To ensure your research is known about, read by others, and contributes to the existing body of knowledge. [CORRECT]
  - b) To divulge confidential information about research participants
  - c) To delay the research process and make it less accessible to others.
  
2. Which of the following is a recommended strategy for presenting quantitative research findings?
  - a) Using first-person voice and long textual narratives without tables.
  - b) Leaving tables and figures to speak for themselves without contextual explanations.
  - c) Displaying data in tables and figures with clear labels and explanations. [CORRECT]
  
3. What information should be included to help research audiences critically appraise the credibility of your findings?
  - a) Only the personal opinions of the researcher
  - b) Detailed descriptions of the research process, data collection instruments, and limitations. [CORRECT]
  - c) An account of key research claims with no mention of methodology or evidence
  
4. Which of the following is NOT something that should appear in your research journal or diary?
  - a) Your research design choices, including research tools, ethical considerations and sampling.
  - b) Your ongoing interpretations of the data.
  - c) A list of personal achievements unrelated to the research. [CORRECT]

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## **Further Reading**

Please ensure that the recommended readings, web resources, and cited references in the guide are inclusive, and represent a diversity of people. Given our global readership, we aim for content that allows individuals with a broad range of perspectives to see themselves reflected in our published resources.

[Insert list of up to six further readings here]

- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2013). *Successful Qualitative Research: A practical guide for beginners*. Sage Publications. (see chapters on quality criteria and writing up qualitative research)
- Kumar, R. (2014) *Research Methodology: a step-by-step guide for beginners* (4<sup>th</sup> Edition), SAGE (see chapters on establishing the validity and reliability of a research instrument, displaying data, writing a research report)
- Wainer, H. (1984). How to Display Data Badly. *The American Statistician*, 38(2), 137–147. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00031305.1984.10483186>
- White, C., Woodfield, K., Ritchie, J., & Ormston, R. (2014). Writing up Qualitative Research. In J. Ritchie, J. Lewis, C. McNaughton Nicholls, & R. Ormson (Eds.), *Qualitative Research Practice* (pp. 367–400). Sage.

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## Web Resources

[Insert links to up to six relevant web resources here]

- Brown, N. (2021) ‘Keeping a research journal that works for you’ <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2021/11/04/keeping-a-research-journal-that-works-for-you/> (accessed 8/10/2024)
- NYU Library (2024) How to Create a Research Poster, <https://guides.nyu.edu/posters> (accessed 8/10/2024)
- The Conversation (n.d.) For examples of academic blogs which often report on research findings see, *The Conversation*, available at <https://theconversation.com/uk> (accessed 8/10/2024)
- Statistics How to (n.d.) Misleading Graphs: Real life examples, available online at <https://www.statisticshowto.com/probability-and-statistics/descriptive-statistics/misleading-graphs/> (accessed 8/10/2024)

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## References

[Insert bibliography of references cited in text here]

References should conform to American Psychological Association (APA) style, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, and should contain the digital object identifier (DOI) where available. Sage will not accept guides that are incorrectly referenced. Please ensure accuracy before submission. For help on reference styling see <https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines>.

- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2013). *Successful Qualitative Research: A practical guide for beginners*. Sage Publications.

- Clark, T., Foster, L., Sloan, L., & Bryman, A. (2021). *Bryman's social research methods*. / Tom Clark, Liam Foster, Luke Sloan, Alan Bryman ; editorial advisor: Elena Vacchelli. Oxford, United Kingdom: (Sixth edition). Oxford University Press.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 105–117). SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Noble, H., & Smith, J. (2015). Issues of validity and reliability in qualitative research. *Evidence Based Nursing*, 18(2), 34–35. <https://doi.org/10.1136/eb-2015-102054>
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- Schreier, M. (2012). *Qualitative Content Analysis in Practice*. Sage.
- Seale, C. (2010). Quality issues in qualitative inquiry. In P. Atkinson & S. Delamont (Eds.), *SAGE Qualitative Research Methods* (pp. 98–109). SAGE Publications, Inc. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9780857028211>
- Wainer, H. (1984). How to Display Data Badly. *The American Statistician*, 38(2), 137–147. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00031305.1984.10483186>
- White, C., Woodfield, K., Ritchie, J., & Ormston, R. (2014). Writing up Qualitative Research. In J. Ritchie, J. Lewis, C. McNaughton Nicholls, & R. Ormson (Eds.), *Qualitative Research Practice* (pp. 367–400). Sage.
- Wolcott, H. (2009). *Writing Up Qualitative Research* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications, Inc. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452234878>
- Wheeler, K. (2025a) 'How to develop research questions: the first stage of the social research toolbox, QGAP'
- Wheeler, K. (2025b) How to Gather Data and Evidence: the second stage of the social research toolbox, QGAP