

Basic Data Interpretation.

You may want to use figures tables and charts to explain your results or the research of others. Introduce the most significant data relevant to your study aim. When describing data it is good to follow a structure.

Possible Data Commentary Structure:

Introduce the general subject of the data and the main trend. Describe specifically these obvious features. This might include the range of data (ie highest and lowest values). Write about any trends and clusters of data or grouping of similar values. How do the clusters compare with each other? You can compare and contrast aspects of your data to define significant features.

Discuss the reasons for singular anomalies which do not fit into patterns.

Contrast your data against measured research with similar aims to explain the anomalies.

You can make deductions, implications and reasons for any significant features as long as it is supported by cited research.

(adapted from McCormack & Slaght, 2008)

Useful Questions for Data Analysis

Consider answering some of the questions below. The answers can be used to present results and introduce discussion and deduction.

What exactly is being shown. This might include people, objects, events?	Does what is shown allow wider conclusions to be drawn?
What kind of measurements of units are used?	Are absolute numbers used or are these proportions?
Where (geographically) does the data come from?	How might the data be different if it came from other places?
When was the data generated (and to when does it refer)?	How up to date is the data (if it needs to be)? How might the data be different at other time periods?
Who (possibly individuals but more likely an organisation) compiled the data?	What kind of bias is there? Who is the author trying to persuade?

McCormack, J and Slaght, J. (2008) Extended Writing and Research Skills Reading: Garnet

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