

Data displays: Tables and figures

At times, it may be appropriate to insert tables and figures (e.g. graphics, photographs, diagrams, maps, graphs, drawings, flowcharts) into your essay. These graphics may have been copied or adapted from your information sources or you may have created the data from your own research. Data displays must be relevant, correctly labelled and appropriately referenced; however, you are not required to reference your own work.

- About tables and figures in your writing
- Inserting tables in-text
- Inserting figures in-text
- Tables and figures in the appendices

NOTE: This fact sheet provides examples of tables and figures in APA format. When using other citation styles, check the appropriate manual.

About tables and figures

Tables and figures may be used as evidence to support academic argument. They are mainly used in report writing. It is important that tables and figures are used purposefully (i.e. with good reason) and that they are referenced correctly. The format for tables is different from the format for figures, **and each has its own numbering system**. Tables and figures are placed immediately after their first mention in the text. Every in-text reference to a table or diagram should include the relevant number and a brief explanation of the important features of the graphic element.

Tables

Tables typically show numerical or textual information in columns and rows. Number all tables with Arabic numerals in the exact order that you place them in your text.

Example: Table modified from reading material

Make specific reference to the table in your paragraph. Then place the table immediately below the paragraph using the same font and size as the rest of the essay.

In text

As shown in Table 3, (do NOT write "above" or "below", or use page numbers), the choice of reporting verbs can reflect the considered position of an author, so writers must be careful to choose reporting verbs that reflect their attitude to the topic.

Table number: Goes above the table. Use plain text, capital for first letter, space, number and a full stop after the number.

Table title: Place beneath the table number, italics, maximal capitalisation.

Table 3.

Reporting Verbs: Examples of Degrees of Endorsement

Less endorsing	Neutral	More endorsing
admits	according to	concur
asserts	argues	emphasises
assumes	details	identifies
believes	remarks	proves
implies	proposes	reasons
suggests	states	refutes

(leave a line)

Note. Table contents are representative list only. Adapted from *A visual guide to essay writing* by V. Rao, K Chanock and I. Krishnan, 2007, pp. 74-75. AALL, Sydney.

Reference information is then reproduced in the reference list in APA format.

The table note:

Note. (capital for first letter, full stop, italics, smaller text size (e.g. 10pt) than the rest of the essay text).

Use the table note for general notes including explanations of definitions and abbreviations, followed by a reference note in the format of **Reprinted from** or **Adapted from** title, author, date, publisher details or retrieval URL

Figures

A figure is an image or graphic information that encapsulates the point you are trying to make. Figures can typically include photographs, diagrams, maps, graphs, drawings and flowcharts. These may be directly copied, modified/adapted from text descriptions or be entirely your own production. Number all figures with Arabic numerals in the exact order that you place them in your text. Place any explanatory legends with the figure.

Example: Figure copied with permission from the author

In-text

Students who are assisted with writing skills during assignment writing can show significant improvement in their assessment marks. Godwin (2004, pp. 24-26) describes an assignment intervention initiative whereby students who obtained less than 50% on the essay could resubmit, provided they consulted a study skills adviser at least twice. After resubmission, each student had made an improvement in their mean score between 21.5 and 31.5 marks (Figure 6). In the next semester, student results in assignments continued to show the same progress in their capabilities.

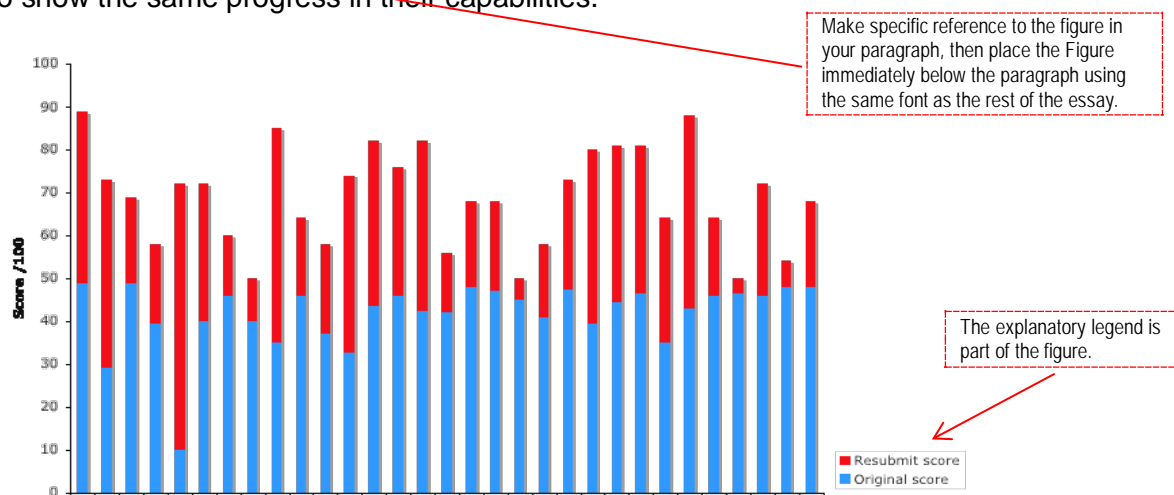


Figure 6. Comparison of original and resubmission scores. Reproduced from “Every Which Way,” by J.Godwin, 2005, Poster presented at Language and Academic Skills in Higher Education Conference, Canberra, November, 24-25.

Place figure number beneath the figure using italics, capital for first letter, full stop after number. Beside the figure number, write the caption (title) in plain text using minimal capitalisation. Then include any acknowledgement that a figure is reproduced or adapted from another source.

Reference information is then reproduced in the reference list in APA format.

Tables and figures in the appendices

If tables and diagrams do not fit neatly into the text of your essay then place them in your Appendices section. Appendices begin on a new page after the references with a centred plain-text heading “Appendix” or “Appendix A”, “Appendix B”, and so on. Place the Appendix/Appendices after the reference list in the order in which they are mentioned in your writing. Each appendix must start on a new page. When you refer to a table or figure in an appendix, use the labels Appendix A, Appendix B, Appendix C in the text of your essay or report:

- **As shown in Appendix B**, the choice of reporting verbs can reflect the considered position of an author, so writers must be careful to choose reporting verbs that reflect the author’s attitude to the topic.
- After resubmission, each student had made an improvement in their mean score between 21.5 and 31.5 marks (**Appendix C**).