THE SPECIAL FOUNDATION COURSE
(SPL. FC)

Table of Contents

Plagiarism Policy

All submissions will be checked for plagiarism through the software. Any submission with plagiarised content will not be graded.

*Please refer to section on Plagiarism in the document for details.

Faculty

Prof. Amir Ullah Khan amir@cdpp.co.in / 987132 2477

Teaching Associate Anjana Divakar anjana@cdpp.co.in / 97050 09449 **Madhav Malhotra** malhotramadhav44@gmail.com/9958605177

Submission specification	Timeline

Submit 1 Policy Area Preference
 	
• *Any policy area/sector can be chosen basis personal preference.*
• *Should ideally include:*
  ▪ *Working Title / Heading for the policy paper.*
  ▪ *Structure of the proposed policy paper, to be described in 6 bullet points -*
	25 January, 2022

300 words Abstract • *Abstract – articulation of what the policy paper will contain.* • *Should ideally include questions that the policy paper will answer, issue that it will handle along with a tentative conclusion (a hypothesis)*	08 February, 2022
Briefing Paper • *To essentially include a literature survey on the chosen topic, including a theoretical component and a practical / case study-based analysis.* • *1500 – 2000 words limit preferred.* • Data Gathering • *In support of the hypothesis* • *Data can be used to create models, showcase trends etc.*	18 February, 2022
Submission of final PPT and draft paper • *Follow up for discussion and comments*	15 March, 2022
Submission of the final policy papers • *Some of the papers submitted can be presented in the last session. Can be initiated as a discussion paper which can be converted into a position paper. To include:* ▪ *6000 words policy paper in APA format*	01 April 2022

Final Presentations:
 	
• _To be accompanied with a presentation – 10- 12 slides (which presents the policy paper contents)_
 	
  ▪ 1 slide – structure of the paper
  ▪ 2-3 slides – literature survey details
  ▪ 3 slides on data
  ▪ 2- 3 slides - executive conclusion – recommendations as per your study
	Last week of April (Dates TBA)

Final Submission of Policy Paper is on 01 April, 2022 Friday (soft copy via email)

*Please note all submissions to be made via email and to

- **Prof. Amir Ullah Khan** amir@cdpp.co.in / 987132 2477 and copied to
- **Anjana Divakar** anjana@cdpp.co.in / 97050 09449
- **Madhav Malhotra** malhotramadhav44@gmail.com / 99586 05177
  on or before the given dates and not later.

Feel free to send in drafts, updates, and discuss any queries and concerns via email or phone.

Readings and guides

- Grin, A. (2021). _Details On How to Write a Policy Paper Given Here_. StudyBay. Retrieved 10 November 2021, from https://studybay.com/blog/how-to-write-a-policy-paper/. https://studybay.com/blog/how-to-write-a-policy-paper/#0

- Glover, D. J. (2002). What makes a good" policy paper"?: ten examples. _EEPSEA special paper/IDRC. Regional Office for Southeast and East Asia, Economy and Environment Program for Southeast Asia_. https://idl-bnc-idrc.dspacedirect.org/bitstream/handle/10625/27168/118102.pdf

- Herman, L. (2013). _Tips for Writing Policy Papers A Policy Lab Communications Workshop_. Www-cdn.law.stanford.edu. https://www-cdn.law.stanford.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/White-Papers-Guidelines.pdf

Policy Paper: An overview

The policy paper is a potent tool and can serve multiple purposes in the policymaking process. Many policy papers are published within policy study targeting other policy experts or think tanks and seeking to inform and influence their audience.

A policy paper should structure a problem facing a decision-maker or decision-makers. It should present the basic, relevant information about the problem and conclude with a recommendation (Argyle, 1991).

These papers may provide general data and insight that can be used at any stage of the policymaking process but can also focus on one or more stages. For example, such specific papers can provide policy alternatives, recommend a policy option, promote a particular policy implementation design, and evaluate a chosen policy option. In general, because of the independent nature of the policy researcher's work, their policy papers tend to be issue-driven. Any policy problem, from a decision to use or not use nuclear weapons in a regional conflict to the type of solid waste disposal plan, may be addressed in a policy paper.

While writing a policy paper, prior planning will help provide clarity in thought and process. Below is a checklist to run by while planning to write a policy paper.

Planning Checklist

- Which stage of policy making process are you trying to influence or address?
- Have you identified a clear policy problem to be addressed?
- Do you have substantial amount of evidence and literature available to support your claim?
- Do you have a set of possible policy options /solutions to provide to solve the identified problem?
- Do you have sufficient evidence to effectively argue for your chosen policy alternative over the others?

Purpose and audience

- What is the purpose of your paper?
- What do you/your institution want to achieve through the writing and publishing of this paper?
- Who is the primary audience for your paper?
- Who are the secondary audiences for your paper/policy ideas?

A policy paper is a problem-oriented and value-driven communication tool. Whether targeting other policy specialists or decision-makers, the purpose of a policy paper is to provide a comprehensive and persuasive argument to justify the policy recommendations presented in the paper and, therefore, to act as a decision-making tool and a call to action for the target audience.

The Policy Paper: Structural and Textual Elements

Creating an Outline for the Policy Paper

 While writing a policy paper, it is always good to start by creating an outline before delving into the process. An outline will help to focus and narrow down on the logic of the paper. Drawing out an outline helps the author decide the key aspects he/she wants to address in the paper and plan how to deliver the paper to the end reader most effectively. Outlining will prove to be a helpful tool in the collaborative writing process.

An example approach might be writing a working statement of intent/ purpose for the paper. Then one could continue by approaching the problem description section of the paper by noting down the critical background and policy environment issues that need to be discussed to outline the problem comprehensively. Next, note what points will be raised under each of these issues and what evidence could support these points. Following the problem description, continue in the same manner for the policy options and conclusion sections.

The process of outlining the paper will help arrange the logic and argument of the policy paper in the planning stage itself, which shall prove to be helpful in the process of writing. It will show the lacuna in the evidence required to substantiate one's argument and recommendation and/or provide clarity to discard ones not required for the same.

Title

The title is the first element of the policy paper or any paper and is also vital for that very reason. A good, attractive and descriptive title for a research/ policy paper is often underestimated or disregarded. However, significantly, the title is more than likely the first part of the paper readers see, and it begins the process of communicating the message in the policy paper.

Divide the paper title into a title and a subtitle. A compelling title should present a quick overview of the subject, focus and problem addressed in the paper

Illustration

You conduct a keyword search using the keywords "nursing", "communication", and "meditation." You come up with results that have the following titles:

1. Benefits of Meditation for the Nursing Profession: A Quantitative Investigation
2. Why Mindful Nurses Make the Best Communicators
3. Meditation Gurus
4. Nurses on the Move: A Quantitative Report on How Meditation Can Improve Nurse Performance

All four of these titles may describe very similar studies - they could even be titles for the same study! As you can see, they give very different impressions.

- Title 1 describes the topic and the method of the study but is not particularly catchy.
- Title 2 partly describes the topic, but does not give any information about the method of the study - it could simply be a theoretical or opinion piece.
- Title 3 is somewhat catchier but gives almost no information at all about the article.

- Title 4 begins with a catchy main title and is followed by a subtitle that gives information about the content and method of the study.
  Source: (Enago Academy , 2021)

As we see in the above illustration, the example shows that all four of the titles show up while searching for a set of keywords related to a particular topic. However, the question then arises which is the most likely to be chosen based on the effectiveness of the title.

An effective title should be a combination of the following:
1. Descriptive, i.e., define the subject and problem addressed in the paper.
2. As clear as possible.
3. As concise as possible.
4. Contain important keywords.
5. Interesting for your readers.

Source: (Hairston & Keene, 2003)

Title	Predicts content?	Interesting?	Reflects tone?	Concise and clear?	Important keywords?
Benefits of Meditation for the Nursing Profession: A Quantitative Investigation	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Why Mindful Nurses Make the Best Communicators	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Meditation Gurus	No	Yes	No	No	No
Nurses on the Move: A Quantitative Report on How Meditation Can Improve Nurse Performance	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Source: (Enago Academy , 2021)

As seen in the table above, only one of the four example titles fulfils all of the criteria of a suitable research/policy paper title previous section to see if they meet these criteria.

- The title can be literary or descriptive, while the subtitle details the specifics of the paper.
- Keywords are often foregrounded in the title.
- Some writers indicate the significant findings of the policy paper in the title.
- Capital letters are generally used for all words except conjunctions (e.g., but), prepositions (e.g., from), pronouns (e.g., our)

Writing Checklist

The following questions may guide you when writing and redrafting the title for your policy paper:

- Which approach to title writing best suits your purpose?
- Is your title effective (descriptive, clear, concise and interesting)?
- How well does your title match and represent the policy paper

Source: (Quinn & Young, 2002)

Table of Contents

The table of contents is a skeleton or an overview of the structure of the policy paper. The table of contents is an organised listing of the document's chapters, sections and, often, figures, clearly labelled by page number. Readers should look at the table of contents page and understand immediately how the paper is organised, enabling them to skip to any relevant section or sub-section. The contents should list all the front, leading, and back matter, including the headings and page numbers of all chapters and the bibliography. It consists of a system of headings and sub-headings that show the paper's overall organisation and illustrate the main sections and their sub-sections. A numbering system is also commonly used in conjunction with headings to illustrate divisions and relationships between sections of the text. The final important feature of a table of contents is the inclusion of page numbers corresponding to the location of specific sections in the main body of the paper.

A good table of contents should be easy to read, accurately formatted and completed last to be 100% accurate. Although one can manually complete a table of contents, many word processing tools like Microsoft Word automatically format the table of contents.

The inclusion of a table of contents in a policy paper helps readers in several ways:

- **The table of contents acts as a guide, leading readers through the whole paper.**
  If readers have to work very hard at understanding the structure of the paper, they may be discouraged from reading the whole paper. Hence, the table of contents helps readers understand the writer's logic in organising and structuring the paper. This point is crucial in a text of such length and complexity as the policy paper.

- **The table of contents assists different types of reading.**
  By indicating major and minor divisions in the paper and including page numbers to locate text sections, the table directs readers to specific sections containing information they may find particularly interesting. The table of contents also helps skim reading by providing readers with a quick overview of the focus and significant issues addressed in the paper.

- **A numbering system to distinguish between main and sub-sections in the table of contents.**
  A single number is used for main sections, and a decimal numbering system used for sub-sections in the sample, e.g., 2.1. If the writer used the third section level, a minor section would be indicated using a double decimal number, e.g., 2.1.1.

- **An indent function to clearly illustrate a sub-section**
  While the writer of the sample table of contents uses this feature in combination with a numbering system, sometimes indentations alone indicate the division between main and sub-sections. If the writer used the third level of sectioning, then a double indentation would signal this level of sectioning,

e.g.,

2. Laws Requiring Competitive Procedures

2.1 EU Directives

2.1.1 German Legislation

As was the case with writing titles for policy papers, writing effective headings and sub-headings in the table of contents is not an exact science. However, the guidelines offered in the previous section may help. It is vital that headings are specific and self-explanatory, thereby effectively serving to give readers an overview of the paper. (Quinn & Young, 2002).

Analysis of Published Policy Papers
Read the following table of contents for sample policy paper "Open Competition, Transparency, and Impartiality in Local Government Contracting Out of Public Services" (Baar, 2001) and consider:

- The effectiveness of the table of contents in showing the writer's the organisation of the paper;
- The system used to make a distinction between the main sections and subsections of the paper;
- The effectiveness of headings and sub-headings.

Table of Contents

Source: (Quinn & Young, 2002)

List of Tables and Figures

After the table of contents, the following table compares all the data and evidence used in the policy paper. The list acts as a quick reference and provides the reader with a guide to the data and sources presented in the paper.

Analysis of Policy Papers

Review the list of tables and figures from the sample policy paper focus on:

- The format (numbering system and layout) of this element of the policy paper;
- The effectiveness of the titles of tables and figures

List of Tables

Table 1.

An example of five alternative models used in forecasting experiments. Industrial production (IP) serves as the output variable, CPI as the measure of price, and M2 as the monetary aggregate. The measure of interest alternates between the interest rate spread (SP) and the federal funds rate (FF). 3

Table 2.

 An example of a caption to another table (which does not appear in these sample pages) ……….. 33

Table 3.

This is another example of a caption to a table (which does not appear in these sample pages) …………………………………………………………………………………………………….. 4

Source: (The University of Toledo, 2010)

Abstract or Executive Summary

The next element of the policy paper is the abstract or the executive summary. The two are quite often mistaken to be the same and used interchangeably.

An abstract is a concise summary of the policy paper, briefly mentioning the goals, method, and findings.

An executive summary summarises the policy paper. It restates the critical purpose of the paper, the main points and describes any results, conclusions, or recommendations from the report

However, it is vital to note that they both are distinct from one another, as we shall see in the following example.

Analysis of Published Policy Papers

Read the abstract for sample policy paper: "Does Citizen Participation in Local Government Decision-Making Contribute to Strengthening Local Planning and Accountability Systems? An Empirical Assessment of Stakeholders' Perceptions in Nepal" (Pandeya, 2015) and the executive summary for sample policy paper: "Linking Competition and Trade Policies in Central and Eastern European Countries" (Hoekman and Mavroidis, 1994).

Consider the following issues:

- the differences in length between the two samples;
- the type of information contained in both

ABSTRACT*: Citizen Participation in local government is usually considered to be an important mechanism for achieving development gains, strengthening local accountability, and empowering citizens. Using exploratory interviews and focused discussions, this study examines qualitatively the role of citizen participation in local*

government decision making and its contribution towards strengthening local planning and accountability systems in Nepal. The findings show that participation strengthened local planning and accountability systems, but that it was also linked to some potential negative outcomes. Outcomes varied depending on the participation structures and other factors, for example, local power and politics, incentives for participation, the capacity of citizens and local governments, and the level of support from elected representatives. These findings suggest that the relationship between citizen participation and participation outcomes is rather complex and dynamic, and that effective participation often depends on the building agency of marginalised groups, the mobilisation of citizens, and on the establishment of vibrant social networks, all of which produce forces that may have various impacts on the effectiveness of participation.

Keywords – Accountability, Characteristics of Local Government and Citizens, Citizen Participation, Local Planning, Nepal

(Pandeya, 2015)

[paragraph numbers in square brackets have been added for later reference]

(Executive) Summary

[1] Six Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries-Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and the Slovak Republic-have negotiated far-reaching Association Agreements with the European Union (EU), so-called Europe Agreements. These Agreements will result in free trade in goods, and include commitments by the CEE countries to adopt many of the disciplines of the Treaty of Rome. This paper focuses on one aspect of the Europe Agreements: competition policy, and does so from the perspective of the trade policy stance of the CEE countries. It explores possible institutional mechanisms that could be implemented by CEE governments with a view to increasing the sensitivity of competition law enforcement to trade and investment policy.

[2] The objective of competition policy in most jurisdictions tends to be efficient resource allocation, and thereby the maximisation of national welfare. Governments pursue trade policies for a variety of reasons, of which efficiency is usually not one. An active trade policy redistributes income between segments of the population by protecting specific industries and the factors of production employed there, and usually does so in an inefficient manner. Trade policy is consequently often inconsistent with the objectives underlying competition policy. The way this inconsistency is frequently put is that competition law aims at protecting competition (and thus economic efficiency), while trade policy aims at protecting competitors (or factors of production). The issue facing governments is to ensure that competition prevails. This requires the design of institutional mechanisms that allow governments to explicitly consider the competition implications of particular trade or investment policies.

[3] The Europe Agreements require that the CEE counties adopt the basic competition rules of the EU for practices that affect trade between the EU and each Central and East European country. These rules relate to agreements between firms restricting competition, abuse of dominant position, the behavior of public undertakings (state-owned firms) and competition-distorting state aids (Articles 85, 86, 90 and 92 of the EEC Treaty respectively). Thus, competition policy is defined widely to include the behavior of governments as well as of firms. Almost all the CEE countries have passed competition legislation and allocated the responsibility for enforcing their competition rules. There are inconsistencies with EU language and implementation criteria/guidelines, some of them substantial, but the thrust of existing provisions is certainly pro-competitive.

[4] Competition authorities in the CEE countries have been given a relatively broad mandate to identify the costs of government policies and actions that restrict competition. Trade policy is an obvious area that should be given priority in this connection. Competition offices have two ways of 'internalising' trade policy. The first is to oppose trade policies that excessively harm competition on the domestic market; the second is to countervail the anticompetitive effect of trade policy on an ex post basis. The first, 'direct' approach has been actively pursued by a number of the CEE competition offices. In this they compare well to competition offices in OECD countries. By commenting on or opposing suggested or existing trade policies, the competition offices ensure that the economy-wide implications of sectoral policies/lobbying are recognised and discussed. The main power of competition offices is, however, of an ex post nature. Active enforcement, with guidelines that clearly specify that trade policy will be an important consideration in the implementing competition laws, will help bolster the effectiveness of ex ante opposition to policy proposals that restrict access to markets.

[5] A number of actions are identified through which competition law enforcement might be strengthened and be made even more sensitive to trade policy. The legislative possibility for antitrust agencies in the CEE countries to act ex officio does not appear to have been fully exploited, although this may largely be the result of the process of the transition towards private ownership and a market economy. The development of detailed guidelines would help both reduce uncertainty regarding the priorities given by the competition authorities to types of competitionreducing practices, and clarify what practices will not be pursued. One common denominator in the legislation of all CEE countries is the wide discretion that the agencies entrusted with the enforcement of competition laws enjoy. This can have a negative side, in the sense that a number of desirable per se prohibitions simply do not exist. An offsetting, positive counterpart is that if discretion is exercised in a pro-competition way, the "jurisprudence" created in this field could further promote the goals of the competition laws. Incorporation of the trade policy stance pertaining to an industry should explicitly be taken into account when defining the relevant market in the enforcement of antitrust. Guidelines to this effect should also be published. Whenever market shares are defined as a threshold (i.e., in the definition of dominant positions) they should be linked to market

contestability considerations—i.e., explicit public recognition that what matters is market power. It would prove very useful for the evolution of the competition philosophy in the CEE countries, and at the same tine enhance transparency, if competent agencies were to publish the reasoning underlying their decisions.

[6] Despite their agreement to adopt EU-compatible competition disciplines, and despite the fact that free trade and freedom of investment will be achieved within ten years, there is no provision in the Europe Agreements specifying that antidumping will be phased out. Continued threats of contingent protection on the part of the EU implies that CEEC firms will face different standards than their EU competitors. EU firms will be permitted to engage in price discrimination or sell below cost on the EU market, whereas CEE firms will be constrained in pursuing such a strategy by the existence of EU antidumping procedures. A review of experience that has been obtained with attempts to abolish antidumping in the context of regional integration agreements suggests that there are at least three necessary conditions for the abolition of contingent protection: (1) free trade and freedom of investment; (2) disciplines on the ability of governments to assist firms and industries located on their territory; and (3) the existence and enforcement of competition (antitrust) legislation. Although these conditions will to a very great extent be satisfied for intra EU-CEE flows, the antidumping option was retained.

[7] An avenue that could be further explored during the transition phase towards full implementation of the Europe Agreements is to establish a link between antidumping and antitrust in instances where CEE countries are facing antidumping threats or actions on the part of the EU. The EC Commission could be asked to apply competition policy criteria in antidumping investigations against products originating in CEE countries, ensuring that there is a threat to competition, not just a threat to an EU competitor. This could be sought on an informal basis during the transitional period. Clearly, the first best strategy for CEE countries is to seek the elimination of antidumping once the Europe Agreements have been fully implemented. If it proves to be impossible to obtain agreement to phase out antidumping, a second-best policy could be to formalise the link between competition law enforcement and antidumping investigations. More generally, since the CEE countries have adopted legislation comparable to that of the EU in the competition field. one can assume that if they enforce their competition laws vigorously, EU-consistent minimum standards will be respected. This may effectively raise the threshold for EU import-competing industries seeking antidumping relief. Vigorous enforcement of competition disciplines in service industries, especially distribution-related, may further help reduce the potential for EU firms to seek contingent protection.

Abstract	Executive Summary
The abstract is a concise overview	The executive summary is a synopsis of the whole paper
It mentions the goals, method, and findings briefly.	An executive summary contains a far more detailed discussion than an abstract
The abstract aims to gain readers' interest by providing a concise overview of the main topic and issues addressed in the paper. Thus the abstract supports the paper, and the writers of the sample lead readers into the paper by referring directly to the paper throughout the abstract, from the beginning ("*..this study examines qualitatively...*") to the end ("*These findings suggest that …*").	Overlap in this function exists because the executive summary also aims to interest readers in reading the whole paper. However, the primary function of the executive summary is to satisfy the needs of those readers who will not read the entire paper and readers whose main interest is in the outcomes of the study findings and proposed policy recommendations, especially decision-makers. Towards achieving this aim, the executive summary represents the whole paper by providing a synopsis of all principal parts and findings, as is the sample case.

A quick overview of the samples will give an idea of the differences between the two; in terms of length and type of information contained in each, which reflects the different function of each in the policy paper.

Introduction

The introduction of the policy paper prepares the reader and sets the premise for the rest of the paper and its contents. Therefore, the role of the introduction is to create an interest for the reader and lay out the nature and context of the policy problem that is addressed further, providing essential background to the research conducted. This will help the reader prepare himself/herself regarding the paper's contents and how the paper will flow, and how the writer has placed his/her research, logic and arguments.

Providing sufficient background and insight is also crucial considering how readers may approach reading the policy paper: as an initial step before reading the whole body of the paper, many readers first read elements which give an overview of the paper (abstract or executive summary, introduction and conclusion). Suppose such elements of the paper as the introduction are written effectively. In that case, the reader will have a clear idea of the direction, focus and main ideas developed throughout the body of the paper. Towards effectively achieving these purposes, a number of structural features are contained in the introduction. The following analysis of sample introductions will begin the process of considering these structural features.

There are a few elements to keep in mind while constructing an introduction for a policy paper:

- **Context of the policy problem**

  The introduction generally opens by "setting the scene" of the paper, i.e., locating the problem addressed in the paper within its broader context. This leads readers into the paper and gives them the general background to understand what follows. However, it is essential to keep this part focused and brief as readers may lose interest if the paper opens with a very general or detailed description of the context. For this reason, many writers quickly narrow down the background information and introduce the issues that are central to the study.

- **Definition of the policy problem**

  This part of the introduction represents the move from more contextual information to the specific issue, which is the focus of the policy paper. This feature is crucial in convincing the reader to share the writer's viewpoint that an urgent problem exists and that the paper is worth reading because it will offer possible solutions to the problem. It is also essential that this feature communicates the writer's position on the problem so that readers can understand the policy alternatives and recommendations proposed later in the paper.

- **Statement of intent**

  This feature, also commonly called the statement of purpose, usually consists of one or two sentences stating the purpose of the policy paper. The statement of intent is significant in building the argument central to the policy paper. Hence, it often reveals the writer's position towards the policy problem and is closely connected to the previous feature of problem definition.

- **Methodology and limitations of the study**

  In the introduction, writers commonly give a brief overview of the methodology used in the policy study, i.e., the framework of analysis used or the variables evaluated. In addition to preparing the reader for this aspect of the paper, this feature is essential in establishing the writer's credibility as a researcher. It helps show that the analysis and arguments developed in the paper are based on good practice. Some writers also choose to indicate the scope and limitations of the study in this feature. The writer's credibility as a researcher is enhanced if he/she acknowledges that a single study cannot address every aspect of the policy problem focused on and that limitations may exist related to research methodology, for example, related to the type and amount of data available for analysis in a study. The inclusion of this limitation illustrates to the reader the complexity of the issue. It informs them that policy recommendations proposed as a result of the research should consider these limitations.

- **Road map of the paper**

  The final feature commonly included in the introduction is a road map, which gives an overview of how the paper is organised. This is important in helping the reader prepare for reading along and potentially complex policy paper.

When writing this element of the policy paper, the following questions may help enhance effectiveness:

- Have you included all features to construct a coherent introduction (context and definition of the policy problem, statement of intent, methodology and limitations, road map)?
- Is the context brief and focused on the problem?
- Have you clearly communicated the nature and urgency of the policy problem?
- Is the purpose of the paper clearly stated?
- Have you introduced your methodology and limitations in scope of the study?
- Is the organisation of the paper presented?

Problem Description

The problem description presents an argument that an urgent problem exists.

- **The problem description identifies, defines and elaborates the nature of the problem-focused in the paper.**
  In giving extensive insight and detail into the nature of the problem, the problem description usually includes a discussion of multiple perspectives of the problem: actors, conditions, causes, constraints, conflicts, interests and values, roles and responsibilities, outcomes and impact.

- **The problem description needs to convince the reader that the issue in focus requires government action.**
  In the politicised world of public policy, many people may not agree that the problem outlined exists. Therefore, while the problem description may include much descriptive or factual information, this element must present an undeniably comprehensive and convincing argument for a problem that needs to be addressed with government action

- **The problem description should focus on outlining the problem within its environment and not on the general environment itself.**
  This part of the policy paper needs to focus immediately on a targeted description of the problem within its past and current environments or contexts, rather than starting with a discussion of the environment and then moving on to the problem.

- **The problem description needs to build a framework within which the policy options which follow can be comprehensively argued.**
  The problem description is the element of the paper that gives detailed insight into the nature of the problem; therefore, it needs to be comprehensive enough to establish a firm foundation on which the policy options that follow can be thoroughly discussed

Constructing the Problem Description: Structure and Argumentation

The problem description outlines the past and present of the problem. The problem description can be said to include the following two features:

- Background of the problem
  - This feature commonly covers the history of the problem: its causes; the group(s) of people affected; the legal, political, economic and social past of the problem; the policies that have been implemented in the past to address the problem and their outcomes.

- The problem within its current policy environment
  - This feature commonly covers the current status of the problem: the current legal, social, economic, political contexts and impacts of the problem, the current extent of the problem, the group(s) affected, the current policy being implemented to address the problem, the successes and failures of the current approach.

  Organise the problem description to suit the topic, purpose and audience.

Writing Checklist

To help plan and write the problem description, consider the following questions:
- Building the problem description
  - Background of the problem
    - When and how did the problem arise?
    - What were its causes?
    - What has been the historical, legal, political, social and economic context of the problem?
    - How did the problem come to public attention?
    - Who has been affected by the problem?
    - What past policies have been implemented to try to address the problem?
    - What were the outcomes of these policies? The problem within its current policy environment
    - What are the current legal, social, economic, political contexts and impacts of the problem?
    - What is the current extent of the problem?
    - What is the current policy being implemented to try to address the problem?
    - What are the differing opinions on the problem and the current approach?
    - In what ways is the current policy succeeding/failing?
    - What is wrong with the current approach?

  - Organising the problem description
    - What aspects of the problem need to be included in the problem description section to present a comprehensive and convincing picture?
    - How to organise the section to make it as understandable and readable as possible

Constructing the Problem: Text and Argumentation

Building an effective problem description requires not only knowledge of what to include and an approach to a logical organisation but also requires an in-depth understanding of the conventions of how text is used in these situations to build convincing arguments.

- **Building a coherent argument that is both convincing and easy to follow.**
  One of the most basic features of good argumentation is coherence, which involves providing transparent links between each part of the argument to picture the overall argument. In order to make the job of the reader easier, the writer must work hard to connect all these parts into one coherent piece. These sections and sub-sections need to be connected with good organisation and clear, descriptive section titles and numbering and need coherence within the text.

- **Coherent and focused development of each element of the argument in the sub-section.**
  It is useful to use the model of argumentation proposed by the philosopher Stephen Toulmin (cited in Karbach, 1987) to consider the development of each element of the argument. Toulmin states that every argument comprises three essential elements: the claim, the support and the warrant.

  These elements can be explained as follows:
  - The claim is the statement of the position/argument.
  - The support is the evidence presented to back up the claim.
  - The warrant explains the connection between the claim and the support. This warrant may not be explicitly stated, as the writer may consider that explanation of the connection is evident for the audience.

These three elements can be seen in paragraph from the sample:

Shifting expenditure responsibilities. In some countries, budgetary responsibility for social expenditures and the social safety net is transferred to the subnational government. In Hungary, for example, responsibility for welfare expenditures was transferred to the localities in 1993 under the Social Assistance Law. *[Claim]* In Ukraine, too, the social safety net is a subnational responsibility. In Russia, the central government transferred social expenditures equivalent to some 6 per cent of GDP to localities in the 1992 budget, pushing the deficit down. *[Support]* The hope seems to have been that sub-national governments would perform the politically painful cutting required, even though the demand for these services is likely to grow with the worsening economic situation. Moreover, in 1993, in Russia, responsibility for key national, inter-jurisdictional investments (such as in transport) was transferred to the subnational sector *[Warrant]*.

Considering these basic elements of argumentation is essential in effectively developing the individual arguments that make up your problem description, and therefore, in constructing a convincing overall argument.

- **Effective use of paragraphing to help develop the argument and help the reader follow it.**
  The purpose of the paragraph is to indicate logical and physical breaks. As such, not only does it help to organise the argument, it also helps the reader to follow each element of the argument easily. Good paragraph divisions also help readers skim reading the paper for a general overview, common practice with such long and complex papers.

- **A second key issue in effective paragraphing is coherence.**
  On the paragraph level, this entails establishing clear links between the sentences in the paragraph. Standard techniques that are used in making such coherent links are:
    o   The repetition of keywords;
    o   The use of parallel structures, i.e., similar phrases and sentence construction;
    o   The use of transition phrases, e.g., next, for example, in addition, also, however.

- **The effective use of sources to build a credible and convincing argument.**
  Supporting the argument with a wide variety of sources is critical in building an effective problem description. By including sources in the text, it builds the argument's credibility, help frame the contribution to the discussion of the particular policy issue in the paper and inform the readers of the basis on which the argument is built with adequate referencing.

  Include a wide variety of authoritative primary and secondary sources.

  The six points that follow the issues highlighted in this analysis.
  1.   Effectively choosing the type of sources to include as evidence
  2.   Effectively incorporating sources into the argument
  3.   Deciding when secondary sources included in the argument need to be referenced/cited
  4.   Following the referencing/citation styles
  5.   Deciding how to include secondary sources in the problem description effectively
  6.   Making references to tables/figures included and commenting on their significance

  ## Writing Checklist
  To help you in building an effective argument in your problem description, consider the following questions:
- **Coherence**
    o   Have you effectively linked all elements of the problem description?
    o   Are the links also clear within each sub-section of the problem description?

- **Argumentation**
    o   Does each element of the argument include a claim, support and warrant?

- **Paragraphing**
    o   Is the problem description adequately divided into paragraphs to provide enough physical breaks in the text for the reader?
    o   Have you developed each logical unit of the argument in a separate paragraph?
    o   Are the paragraphs coherently developed?

- **Use of sources**
    o   Have you built the problem description on the use of a wide variety of sources?
    o   Have you included sources that are authoritative enough to support the argument?
    o   Have you used the sources as evidence to support the arguments?

o Have you referenced/cited source data that you feel cannot be considered common knowledge?

o Have you followed the citation conventions that the publisher/ discipline requires?

Policy Options

After providing a detailed background and current policy environment of the problem in the policy paper, the policy options element entails discussing the possible ways to solve the problem. The policy options element presents an argument for the preferred policy alternative based on evaluating all possible alternatives.

The policy options element:

- **Outlines evaluate and compare the possible policy alternatives.**
  Whether developed by the writer or others, all possible policy options must be presented to build a comprehensive and convincing case. In outlining each of these options, the element usually focuses on evaluating each option in solving the specific problem and how the options compare in this regard.

- **Provides a convincing argument for the preferred policy alternative.**
  In presenting the policy options, the writer's goal is to use the evaluation results and comparison to demonstrate that the chosen policy alternative will most effectively address the problem, thereby justifying the writer's decision. Of course, this means that the writer should also use the evidence to show why the other policy alternatives have been rejected clearly.

- **Focuses on reporting a decision made.**
  It should report the decisions made about each option and the reasons behind each decision.

- **Builds a clear and coherent link to the conclusions and recommendations element of the policy paper.**
  The argument for the preferred policy option must be the foundation and justification for the final recommendations. Therefore, it must be linked to the recommendations section in the conclusion of the paper

Constructing the Policy Options: Structure and Argumentation

The policy options element consists of two main structural features:

- **Framework of analysis**
  The framework of analysis is a statement of the ideals and values which guide evaluation. This framework of analysis directly informs the evaluation of the policy options presented. In order to allow for informed evaluation of the argument, the inclusion of this framework is a crucial feature.

- **Evaluation of policy alternatives**
  Present and justify the evaluation of the policy options outlined based on the framework of analysis. And also, state the limitations of the chosen option.

Writing Checklist

To help plan and write the evaluation of policy alternatives, consider the following questions:

- What policy options are you going to discuss in the paper?
- Which is your chosen policy option?
- What approach are you going to take to argue for the chosen alternative?
- What are the limitations of your chosen policy option? For each policy option
- What is the overall evaluation of the option?
- Why is this your preferred alternative?/ Why is this not your preferred alternative?
- Which criteria from the framework of analysis formed the basis of your decision?
- What are the positive and negative aspects of this option?
- How does this option compare to the others outlined?

Constructing the Policy Options: Text and Argumentation

Many of the issues discussed in the previous section are also directly applicable to the writing of this element, i.e., coherence, construction of the elements of the argument and paragraphing the policy options element, the writer's voice should dominate.

- In the policy options element, the writer's voice should dominate
- Less prominent use of primary or secondary sources in the argument

Writing Checklist

To help you in building an effective argument in your problem description, consider the following questions:

- Coherence
  - Have you effectively linked all elements of the problem description?
  - Are the links also clear within each sub-section of the problem description?

- Argumentation
  - Does each element of the argument include a claim, support and warrant?

- Paragraphing
  - Is the problem description adequately divided into paragraphs to provide enough physical breaks in the text for the reader?
  - Have you developed each logical unit of the argument in a separate paragraph?
  - Are the paragraphs coherently developed?

Conclusion and Recommendations

This final central element brings the policy paper to an end by synthesising the significant findings of the research and outlining the writer's suggested course of action towards solving the policy problem analysed throughout the paper. Hence, the purpose of the policy paper as a decision-making tool and call to action is ultimately fulfilled in this element. The fact that the conclusion and recommendations are the final major part of the paper also means that it is responsible for leaving a lasting impression on the reader. Considering the reading process and primary interests of some

readers of policy papers reveal a different role played by this element: many readers read this section together with the introduction and abstract or executive summary as an initial stage before reading the detailed main body of the paper.

Therefore, the conclusion and recommendations element plays a vital role in helping these readers get a clear overview of the whole paper. Some readers are also particularly interested in the policy recommendations proposed in the paper and may start their reading by first looking at the recommendations and then at the rest of the paper.

The three structural features which are commonly included in the conclusions and recommendations element:

- **Synthesis of major findings**
  The synthesis highlights main points from the problem description and policy options elements. Because a policy study may be long, complex and detailed, drawing conclusions and providing a review and synthesis of main findings is important before detailing specific recommendations.

- **Set of policy recommendations**
  Outline the measures proposed to solve the policy problem. This feature is central to the whole policy paper, as the ultimate aim of the study is not to gather and analyse data about a policy problem but to develop a set of recommendations based on the research conducted. In order to persuade the reader that proposed recommendations represent the best means of solving the policy problem focused on throughout the study, recommendations must be clear, practical, persuasive, logical and comprehensive. In writing effective recommendations, focusing on the different approaches of writers may provide some guidance.

  When writing the recommendations, consider how they can logically be divided into separate proposals and what approach can make them identifiable. Divide and present the proposed solution in a separate measure.

- **Concluding remarks**
  The concluding remarks complete and close the paper. This feature also serves to leave the reader with some final thoughts on the subject of the paper. A common approach adopted by writers in this feature is to bring the discussion of the subject full circle, i.e., return the focus of the discussion to the broader context of the problem, which commonly opens the introduction element of the paper. This may give a final sense of completeness and wholeness to the paper and effectively close the argument by illustrating to the reader that implementing the proposed solutions to the problem will have a broader impact on society.

Writing Checklist
The following questions can serve as a guide when writing this element of the paper:
- Have you synthesised only the significant findings of the study?
- Are the recommendations logically divided into separate measures and presented?
- Are all recommendations effectively written?
- Does the conclusion provide a sense of completeness to the paper?

Endnotes

Published policy papers often include a separate page entitled "Endnotes" or "Notes" after the conclusion and recommendation section. This element consists of a list of numbers with notes corresponding to the same numbers in the body of the paper at specific points. In some publications, preference is given to a footnoting convention, i.e., including such notes in the body of the paper at the bottom of the relevant page. Endnotes give additional information and identify further sources.

- To provide additional discussion, explanation or definition of terms.

  In this case, the additional information is relevant to and supports the main text but is not included in the body of the paper because it is not central to supporting the main arguments in the paper, and its inclusion would interrupt the flow of the discussion.

- To direct interested readers to sources where further or background information can be found on the issues discussed in the main body of the paper

  Obviously, a writer cannot include a detailed discussion of every aspect of all issues in the paper; hence, endnotes can lead interested readers to further sources used to inform the study.

Bibliography

A bibliography or list of referenced sources is a key element of a policy paper as it allows the readers easy access to the foundation of the argument. Including a list of works cited allows the reader to judge the basis on which the argument is built and provide them with a comprehensive guide to the currently available sources on the topic and region in question, which they can then use in their work.

In fact, the inclusion of a bibliography may have particular importance for policy study specialists who would like to influence the opinions of policy analysts.

Policy study usually follows author-date citation conventions. The APA and Chicago style is the most popular style conventions. This document and the sample below follow the APA style for citations.

References

- Achenbach, T.M., & Edelbrock, C. (1987). Manual for the Youth Self-Report and Profile. Stowe, VT: University of Vermont, Department of Psychiatry.

- Anderson, A. K. (2005). Affective influences on the attentional dynamics supporting awareness. Journal of Experimental Psychology: General, 154, 258–281. doi:10.1037/0096-3445.134.2.258 Blout, R.L., Piira, R., & Cohen, L.L. (2003). Management of pediatric pain and distress due to medical procedures.

- In M.C. Roberts (Ed.), Handbook of pediatric psychology (3rd ed.) (p. 216–233). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

- Curry, N. (1985). Cognitive coping processes as predictors of adaptive functioning in children visiting the dentist. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH

Appendices

Following the main body of the policy paper, writers commonly decide to include additional information in appendices.

- Appendices support and supplement the main arguments developed throughout the paper.

  The support function of appendices serves those readers who would like to understand further issues discussed in the paper. This is achieved by allowing readers access to supplementary information contained in the body of the paper.

- Appendices are optional and should not be included unless necessary.

  Many sample policy papers analysed in developing this guide did not contain appendices. Hence, writers must evaluate the benefits and contributions of including additional information in appendices. Answering the questions included in the writing checklist below will help in the decision-making process and justify the inclusion of proposed appendices.

- Common criteria used in deciding what to place in appendices are the type, length and level of detail of information.

  It is impossible to prescribe what should be included in the appendices as every policy study differs in terms of policy problem and issues addressed, and employs different research methodology and data sources. In deciding what to include, it is important to evaluate what type of information may support the discussion.

Writing Checklist

Use the following questions to evaluate whether appendices are required to support the policy paper:

- Is the supplementary information in an appendix necessary, or would it be sufficient to refer in the text (or footnote/endnote) to the source containing the information?
- Is the information contained in the appendices crucial to support specific sections of the argumentation?

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is presenting another person's ideas, words, or entire work as one's own. Plagiarism may sometimes have legal repercussions (e.g., when it involves copyright infringement) but is always unethical.

The author must ensure that any material copied into the policy paper is put in inverted commas (") and cited. Meaning the source should be mentioned either in a footnote, endnote or in-text citation {such as - The author speaks of mobilisation in her work in slum rehabilitation areas (XYZ 2009). Ensure also to add the full citation in the bibliography while using in-text citations}.

Please consult this page that details what constitutes plagiarism and advice on ensuring plagiarism do not occur (paraphrasing, citing, etc.).

Links for reference:

https://ctl.yale.edu/writing/using-sources/understanding-and-avoiding-plagiarism/what-plagiarism

28 Guidelines at a Glance on Avoiding Plagiarism | ORI - The Office of Research Integrity (hhs.gov)

Sample Policy Papers

This section consists of links to various policy papers to use as a reference.

- Abbott, R., & Bogenschneider, B. (2018). Should robots pay taxes: Tax policy in the age of automation. Harv. L. & Pol'y Rev., 12, 145.

- Altig, D., Baker, S., Barrero, J. M., Bloom, N., Bunn, P., Chen, S., ... & Thwaites, G. (2020). Economic uncertainty before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Public Economics*, *191*, 104274.

- Ballard-Rosa, C., Martin, L., & Scheve, K. (2017). The structure of American income tax policy preferences. The Journal of Politics, 79(1), 1-16.

- Chaurey, R. (2017). Location-based tax incentives: Evidence from India. *Journal of Public Economics*, *156*, 101-120.

- Cuthill, M., & Fien, J. (2005). Capacity building: Facilitating citizen participation in local governance. *Australian journal of public administration*, *64*(4), 63-80. https://www.academia.edu/download/30356793/unpan030164.pdf

- Dahl, R. A. (2005). What political institutions does large-scale democracy require?. *Political Science Quarterly*, *120*(2), 187-197. https://www.jstor.org/stable/20202514
- Elgin, C., Basbug, G., & Yalaman, A. (2020). Economic policy responses to a pandemic: Developing the COVID-19 economic stimulus index. *Covid Economics*, *1*(3), 40-53.

- Faria-e-Castro, M. (2021). Fiscal policy during a pandemic. *Journal of Economic Dynamics and Control*, *125*, 104088.

- Jha, R. (2020). R. Kavita Rao and Sacchidanada Mukherjee (Eds.), Evolution of Goods and Services Tax in India. Journal of Development Policy and Practice, 5(2), 202–204. https://doi.org/10.1177/2455133320957428

- Michels, A., & De Graaf, L. (2010). Examining citizen participation: Local participatory policymaking and democracy. *Local Government Studies*, *36*(4), 477-491. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03003930.2010.494101

- Mukherjee, S. (2020). Inter-governmental Fiscal Transfers in the Presence of Revenue Uncertainty: The Case of Goods and Services Tax (GST) in India. Journal of Development Policy and Practice, 5(1), 74–102. https://doi.org/10.1177/2455133320909927

- *Note: All readings mentioned in the course outline are available to access via :https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1s4Ju7j6UBuvK0weNHaVn7MqtJFkRT4jY?usp=sharing

References

- Argyle, N. J. (1991). Instructions for Writing Policy Position Papers. Retrieved from https://www.valdosta.edu/pa/documents/polpospa.pdf

- Enago Academy . (2021). *Important Tips on Writing a Research Paper Title*. Retrieved from Enago Academy : https://www.enago.com/academy/write-irresistible-research-paper-title/

- Hairston, M., & Keene, M. L. (2003). *Successful Writing.* New York, NY; London:: W.W. Norton, c2003.

- Pandeya, G. P. (2015). Does Citizen Participation in Local Government Decision-Making Contribute to Strengthening Local Planning and Accountability Systems? An Empirical Assessment of Stakeholders' Perceptions in Nepal. *International Public Management Review*.

- Quinn, E., & Young, L. (2002). *Writing Effective Public Poliy Papers.* Retrieved from file:///C:/Users/USER/Desktop/writing_effective_public_policy_papers_young_quinn.pdf

- The University of Toledo. (2010). Manual for the Formatting of Graduate Dissertations and Theses. In T. U. Toledo. Retrieved from https://www.utoledo.edu/graduate/files/ APA_Samples_V4.pdf