

What is a talk/presentation and what is its purpose?

Formal requirements

We understand an introductory talk to mean a short presentation made to a group with a closing proposal/topic for discussion and the subsequent moderation of that discussion. This means that the talk should last 15 minutes, cover the key information on a topic and produce a short final statement that will provide a basis for discussion. Depending on the particular seminar, it may be possible to give longer talks of 30-40 minutes.

Talks provide an opportunity to be actively involved in a seminar and share in its outcome. They also allow you to gain greater insight into a particular area and to hone your speaking and presentation skills. The content and structure of a talk should always be agreed with the lecturer in advance. Do not leave this too late, as it may be necessary to make changes to your talk.

Talks should fulfil the following requirements:

-Content:

- They should have a clear structure
- Refer to literature that is not already being used in the seminar
- Make a critical analysis of the topic/issue from different perspectives
- Formulate your own opinions but back them up with evidence
- Explain specialist terminology or references to people as required
- Come to a final conclusion
- Formulate questions for discussion with the group
- Moderate the discussion with comments on content, questions and elaborations

- Presentation:

- Use appropriate media and visual aids (slides/PowerPoint/graphics/diagrams on the board, etc.) along with examples (How do I present my topic in an appropriate and stimulating way in order to encourage others to take an interest?)
- Body posture and voice modulation/volume (Remember – the most important medium in the presentation is you, the presenter!)
- Time management (How much time do I have available? Which issues should I look at in more detail and which issues only briefly?)
- Professional moderation (Who gets to speak in which order and how do I comment on the contributions and draw them logically together?)

- Handout:

A handout helps those attending the seminar to follow your talk more easily. Decide what content you want to include in the handout, but avoid information overload!

A handout can be used:

- To give an overview of your talk
- To explain key terms and contexts
- To provide a written basis for further work
- To provide details of relevant literature and further reading