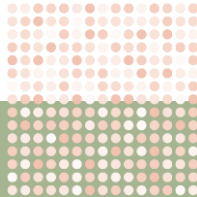




GLION SELF-HELP SERIES

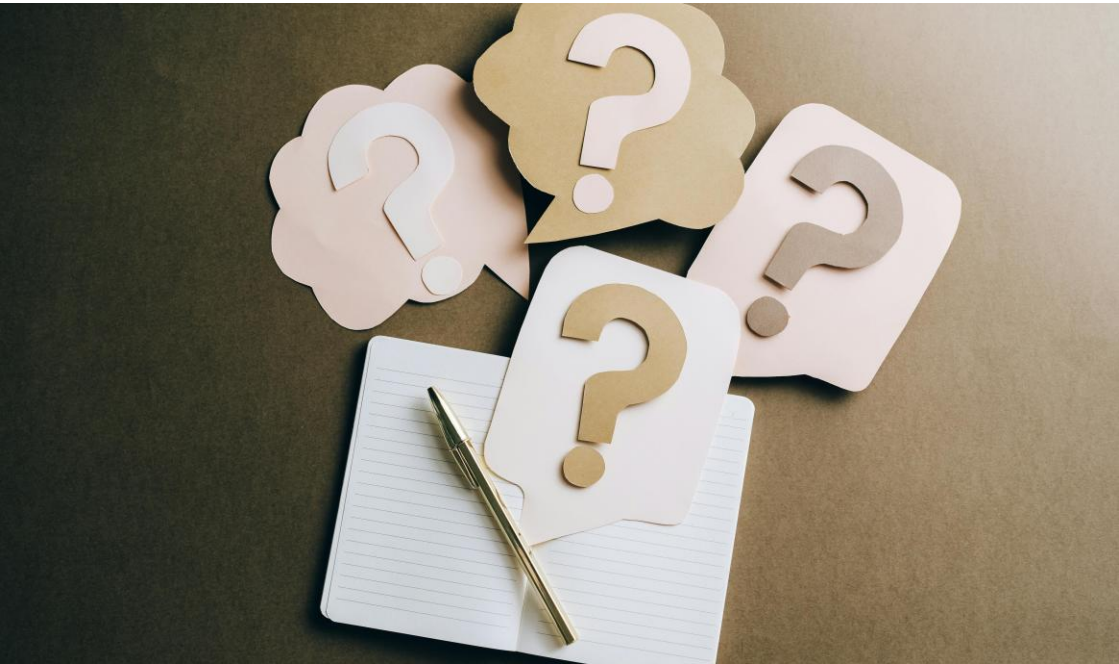
Learning Support



Writing a research question



A strong research question is the foundation of any good academic project. It guides your reading, shapes your analysis, and keeps your work focused.



What Is a Research Question?

A research question is a clear, focused question that your project seeks to answer. It tells your reader what you want to find out and helps you stay on track as you search for and analyze information.



Why Is It Important?

- Gives direction: Helps you choose relevant sources and methods
- Keeps you focused: Prevents your paper from becoming too broad or too narrow
- Clarifies your purpose: Makes it easier to explain your project to others
- Guides your argument: Leads to a clear thesis or conclusion





Step-by-Step: How to Write a research question

1 Choose a Broad Topic

Start with an area that interests you.

Example: *Hospitality management*

2 Narrow It Down

Focus on a specific issue, place, or group.

Example: *Guest satisfaction in luxury hotels*

3 Turn It Into a Question

Use question words like what, how, why, to what extent.

Example: *How do luxury hotels use personalization to improve guest satisfaction?*

4 Check That It's Researchable

A good research question should be:

- **Clear:** Easy to understand
- **Focused:** Narrow enough to explore in your assignment's word limit
- **Researchable:** You can find enough data and sources to answer it
- **Analytical:** Requires more than a yes/no answer

5 Refine and Test

Ask yourself:

- Can I answer this with the time and resources available?
- Does it connect to my course or assignment objectives?
- Will it lead to analysis, not just description?



Examples

Weak Question	Why It's Weak	Stronger Question
Are hotels using technology?	Too broad and yes/no question	How has the use of automation in luxury hotels affected guest satisfaction since 2020?
What is sustainability?	Too vague	How do boutique hotels implement sustainability practices to attract eco-conscious travelers?
Do students like online learning?	Too general	To what extent do Swiss hospitality students find online learning effective compared to in-person classes?





Tips & Tricks

- Use "how" or "why": These often lead to deeper analysis
- Avoid yes/no questions: They don't allow for critical discussion
- Be flexible: You may refine your question after finding sources
- Keep it relevant: Tie it to your course learning outcomes or assignment brief
- Use Concept Mapping: Draw a mind map of your topic, connecting related ideas and keywords. This helps visualize themes, spot gaps, and decide which focus is most interesting or researchable.





Tips & Tricks

- Try the PICO(T) Framework: Especially useful for structured research questions

P = Population or Problem (*Who/What is being studied?*)

I = Intervention/Interest (*What are you focusing on?*)

C = Comparison/Context (*What is the setting or distinct characteristics and what do you want to compare?*)

O = Outcome (*What are you aiming to accomplish, measure, improve, etc.?*)

T = Time (*Optional — over what period?*)

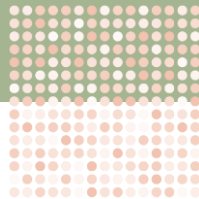
Example: *In boutique hotels (P), how does offering plant-based menu options (I) compared to standard menus (C) influence guest satisfaction ratings (O) over a one-year period (T)?*

More information on the Library website, in the Search Step-by-Step page:

https://library.glion.edu/learning-support/my_research_step_by_step/

Direct link to section e) in the presentation here:





Contact us

THE LEARNING SUPPORT TEAM

learningsupport@glion.edu

THE LIBRARY & INFORMATION SERVICES TEAM

library@glion.edu