



Writing a CSaP Working Paper series

What is a working paper?

A working paper is a report (either a review – rapid or comprehensive, a technical report, a scientific report – including empirical/modelling analysis, or a discussion paper). The core types of submissions to the CSaP Working Paper series will refer to work that makes reference to policy or has applications to policy areas.

Who can submit a working paper?

We welcome submissions from PhD students, faculty, post-doctorates, and research associates, as well as policy professionals.

Who is the audience?

The primary audience will be policy professionals, though academics will also be a likely audience. The working paper should be written in mind of being accessible and readable by those who would benefit from work that has applications to policy.

What is an executive summary?

An executive summary is akin to an abstract for an article that accompanies any academic paper. The key differences between a standard abstract, and an executive summary is the latter is a one-page outline of the main content of the paper that contains the essential details of what the report covers, along with conclusions, and what the recommendations are.

The executive summary should contain the following sections: Objectives, Analytic/Methodological Approach, Key Findings, Conclusions, Recommendations.

Objectives: This section includes details about the focus of the working paper, what it attempts to address (e.g. a problem statement, central questions), and some minimal background to contextualise and motivate why the question/problem has been addressed.

Analytic/Methodological Approach: This section can refer to either an empirical approach taken (qualitative/quantitative, or both), a modelling approach, details of how a review was conducted, details regarding the conceptual analysis undertaken (e.g. development of a framework, application of theory/theories to address the main objectives).

Key Findings: This section includes details of what the main findings are from the analysis conducted.

Conclusions: This section presents a synthesis of the objectives that have been addressed, and what inference can be made from this.

Recommendations: This section should be written in such a way that the audience, primarily policy professionals, can see where the findings/discussion/conceptual analysis can be applied in general, or to a specific, policy issue(s).

Are the working papers refereed?

The submitted working papers will not be sent out for review, but there will be a light touch editing process to ensure that papers are suitable for the main audience. The editing will primarily focus on



making suggestions for how the executive summary communicates critical details in an accessible as well as accurate manner given the content of the paper.

What should the length of the working paper be?

There is no set word/page limit for working papers, though in general the aim should be for working papers to be no more than 30 pages (double spaced).

What is the format of the working paper?

There is no standardised format for working papers, other than the cover pages: the front page with the title, author details and the CSaP banner, and the second page which contains the executive summary.

How can the papers be cited?

Working papers may be cited without seeking permission from the author. The format for citing working papers in this series is:

Author. Year. Title. Assigned Number. *Centre for Science and Policy, University of Cambridge Working Paper series.*

What is the status of working papers?

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What is the dissemination process of working papers?

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