

	HUMANITIES		SOCIAL SCIENCES		SCIENCES	
Typical subjects	English	Philosophy	History Economics Management Political Science	Sociology Education Linguistics Psych	Nursing Physics Biology Geog	Astrom Chem Geology Eng Forestry
Focus of study	Literature, Texts	Ideas about reality	Human activity		Physical world	
Typical assumptions about disciplinary knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No one right answer - Multiple interpretations - Interpretations important - Knowledge not necessarily cumulative - Exact words are important in understanding, interpreting (and perhaps even in shaping) the "reality" in question 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Generally, no one right answer (except e.g., to questions of historical fact or human physiology), but some answers, models, and interpretations are better than others, e.g., if they have better explanatory, predictive, or practical value - Knowledge is generally cumulative - In some cases, wording may be important in understanding, interpreting (and shaping?) reality 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One right answer; current (tentative) models bring us closer to that answer - Knowledge is cumulative - Reality is independent of the words used to describe it; it's the reality behind the "transparent window" of working that's important 	
Typical kinds of writing	Analytical essays about texts, writers, and ideas		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analytical essays on events, phenomena, social behaviour, people, practices, etc. - Case studies, papers on practice - Experimental research papers 		Experimental research papers	
Typical structural features of the writing; typical documentation style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introductions and conclusions are expected by otherwise structure is highly flexible - Headings seldom used - Year not prominent in documentation style (e.g., MLA) 		Depend on the nature of the paper: the more like a scientific research paper, the more highly prescribed the structure		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Structure is highly prescribed (introduction, literature review, sample, method, findings, discussion, etc.) - Headings conventional - Year prominent in documentation style (e.g., APA) 	
Typical focus, tone, evidence, and use of sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong, argumentative thesis (risk-taking is common), supported especially by material quoted from primary sources - Confident tone - Material from secondary sources (quoted if the original wording is important, paraphrased if not) may support the writer's argument. (Material from other sources, e.g., encyclopedia, textbooks can be consulted but is rarely used as evidence or in building an argument.) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Depend on the nature of the paper: the more like a scientific research paper, the more tentative the tone, the larger the focus on primary research and evidence and the smaller the focus on secondary sources (e.g., brief references within a lit. review) - In analytical essays, secondary sources may be heavily used, with differences between accounts, models, interpretations, etc. emphasized in order to refined and improve our understanding of the thing studied - Primary sources especially valued in history 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on conclusions from actual research reported in the paper - Tentative tone (in keeping with the assumption that the work can at best only bring us closer to the answer) - Brief references to secondary sources support the research and orient the reader (as part of a literature review) - Quotes rarely used 	