



Centre for  
**Business &  
Commercial Laws**

NATIONAL LAW INSTITUTE UNIVERSITY, BHOPAL

# *A PRIMER ON WRITING RESEARCH PAPERS AND BLOGS*

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**June 2020**

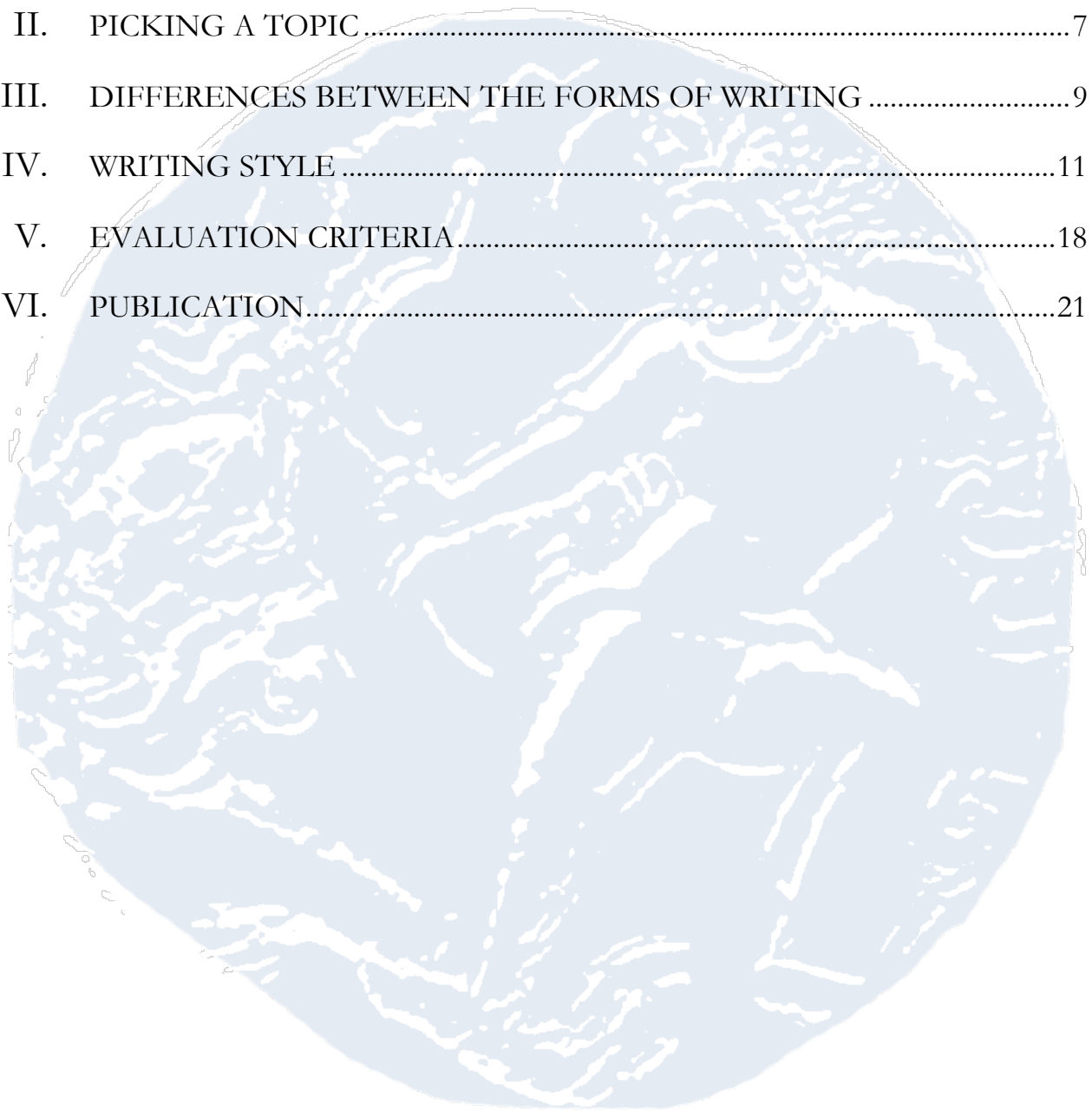
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## ABOUT CBCL

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The Centre for Business and Commercial Laws (CBCL) is a 'Centre of Excellence' established in 2008 at National Law Institute University (NLIU), Bhopal with the intention of generating corporate awareness and facilitating research. In the last decade, it has provided several avenues to students for exploring the realm of business and corporate laws to develop strong foundations required to be a successful practitioner in the field. CBCL undertakes a variety of engagements with the corporate world to further this aim and foster interest and aptitude among students for business and commercial laws.



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The *NLIU – Trilegal Summit on Corporate and Commercial Laws* is one such event conducted by CBCL jointly with Trilegal that is unique in its scope and ambit amongst all law schools in the country, as well as a unique example of academic-corporate partnership. The Summit witnesses 15 paper presentations on various topics selected after a rigorous process of selection, which are also published in a commemorative book by Eastern Book Company. The initial editions of the Summit, which focused on Mergers and Acquisitions, held in 2016 and 2017 were a resounding success, witnessing submissions and participation by law students from across the country. In 2018, the Summit was expanded to include corporate and commercial laws and was successfully held in August of the same year, attracting over 110 contributions. The fifth edition of the Summit was held in August 2019 and received an overwhelming response from students of more than 40 law schools across India. The esteemed panel for this edition consisted of commercial laws experts like Shri Yogesh Singh (*Partner, Trilegal*), Shri Ramakant Rai (*Partner, Trilegal*), Shri Shekhar (*Joint Director, Competition Commission of India*), Shrimati Ranjeeta Dubey (*General Manager, Reserve Bank of India*), Dr. R.J.R Kasibhatla (*Deputy Legal Advisor, Ministry of Law and Justice*), Dr. Naveen Bali (*Assistant Professor, Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs*) among others.

CBCL also publishes the *NLIU Journal of Business Laws*, an annual peer-reviewed business law journal which aims to create meaningful debate and discourse to help build a fair and equitable regime of business laws and to study the dynamic confluence of the academic and the transactional world represented by such laws. The Board of Advisors of the Journal include legal luminaries like Justice S.J. Mukhopadhaya (*Chairperson, National Company Law Appellate Tribunal*), Justice G. Raghuram (*Director, National Judicial Academy*), Shri T.K.Viswanathan (*Chairperson, Bankruptcy Law Reforms Committee (2014)*), Prof. Ajeet N. Mathur, (*Professor (Business Policy), IIM, Ahmedabad*), Prof. Umakanth Varottil (*Associate Professor, NUS, Singapore*), Shri Somasekhar Sundaresan (*Independent Legal Counsel*), Shri Vikram Raghavan (*Lead Counsel, World Bank*) and Shri Vinod Kothari (*Director, Vinod Kothari Consultants*).

In 2017, CBCL launched *The CBCL Blog* which invites submissions from students and practitioners across India on issues relevant to the areas of corporate law, law of arbitration, insolvency law, taxation law, and sports law. So far, the blog has published over 150 submissions and has been acclaimed by legal practitioners and students, alike. We aim to transform it into a one-stop destination for corporate and business laws in the future.

Recently, CBCL has also collaborated with Khaitan & Co. to organise the *NLIU – Khaitan Course on Corporate Laws*, which is a two-day course held in February every year. In 2020, Shri Ashish Razdan, Shri Vineet Shingal and Shrimati Shreya Dua, from Khaitan & Co., discussed and interacted with students over important deal structures, transaction documents, Due Diligence and FEMA Regulations, conducted the course. The course class consisted of 60 students selected from NLIU.

## ABOUT NLIU

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The National Law Institute University, (NLIU) Bhopal, was established by the Rashtriya Vidhi Sansthan Vishwavidyalaya Adhiniyam, by Act No. 41 of 1997 enacted by the Madhya Pradesh State Legislature. NLIU is recognized by the University Grants Commission and the Bar Council of India. The *VISION* of NLIU is to become one of the best centres of legal education, training and research in the world.



The *MISSION* of NLIU is to develop and nurture the intellect for the betterment of the nation and humanity through law and justice. The *OBJECTIVES* of NLIU, *inter alia*, are to contribute to national development by instilling a sense of responsibility among her students, while simultaneously inculcating a spirit of intellectual freedom, qualities of leadership, imaginative power and clarity. NLIU as one of India's premier law schools has always fostered partnerships at both the national and international level to cater to the interests of students.

The University endeavours to enhance the legal landscape of India and contribute to the society with the help of its experienced and dedicated staff and bright young minds, providing an excellent platform for its students to gain invaluable experience by maintaining ties with top corporate law firms throughout the country and abroad. It boasts of alumni that have excelled in areas of corporate law and have made great strides in their respective fields. The University seeks to provide its students with an environment which is a healthy mix of fervour, idealism, experience and moderating values and to inculcate in them the knowledge, confidence and competence to become able lawyers of tomorrow.

# INTRODUCTION

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The team at CBCL strongly believes that ‘legal research and writing’ forms an indispensable component in the field of law. In fact, it forms the foundation of success not only as a law student, but also as a professional. Researching and writing provides exposure to knowledge while enhancing analytical skills. We believe that the process enables one to be aware of legal developments and even appreciate the nuances of law. Hence, legal research writing is a skill that every law student must acquire. Accordingly, at CBCL, we aim to promote legal research and provide a platform to students to develop their knowledge in the field of business laws.

Now we hope to build on our past experiences as editors and publishers of the *NLIU Journal of Business Laws*, *The CBCL Blog* and the commemorative *NLIU- Trilegal Summit Book*, to present this publication, titled, “**A Primer on Research Paper and Blog Writing**”. We attempt to guide law students on the process of writing a research paper or a blog.

It begins with a discussion on the importance of choosing the right topic for research. Thereafter, it highlights the difference between a research paper, a blog, a case comment and a legislative comment by elucidating on what each of them entails. The Primer also explains and provides suggestions regarding various components of writing style, i.e. abstract, structure and the manner of writing. Furthermore, it offers an interesting and rare insight into the factors that form the evaluation criteria, for instance, the contemporary relevance of the topic, referencing and research, etc. The last section of the Primer provides the reader with the points which one should keep in mind while deciding on a platform for publication.

## PICKING A TOPIC

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Writing a good research paper involves a myriad of aspects; the foremost being picking the right research topic. It is a crucial step, which needs to be undertaken with utmost diligence to ensure that the latter part of writing the research paper is hassle free. However, most researchers and writers struggle to decide a topic for their research.

Directly skipping to writing without first choosing the correct topic for your research paper can often lead to a disaster. Therefore, it is imperative to choose a suitable research topic. It is often said that ‘writing is an art’, but we believe that, being able to choose an appropriate research topic is the biggest art, with a lot of effort and brainstorming. To avoid this blunder, it is important for us to understand the importance of choosing the right topic and only then proceeding with the research.

Now, what does picking the correct research topic mean? Can it be subjective depending upon various genres of writing, writing styles or subject matter? Certainly, a correct research topic can have different definitions for different people, but for us, it is a topic which is trending and relevant in the contemporary world. It does not mean choosing any topic which appears attractive at the first instance, but rather choosing a topic which arouses a sense of curiosity in you. A topic which makes a reader inquisitive enough to read and learn more about. In fact, when a writer would want to go into the depth and understand more about the problem himself, whilst finding solutions, may be called a good research topic.

Now, how will one know that a particular area/subject matter triggers your inquisitiveness? Here comes the role of reading. Reading is a quintessential part of writing a decent research paper. You cannot simply write anything without knowing enough about it. Read as much as you can and brainstorm upon the subject matter that interests you but do not be reluctant to step out of your comfort zone. Reading a newspaper is one of the best ways to draw a list of relevant topics. Newspapers provide you information from a gamut of subject areas that you can read and write about. Additionally, you can also read news articles that are available online on various media platforms. Another important source would be to read blogs from major corporate firms or student run blogs. One can also read research papers published in reputed journals to get a knack of how the topics are chosen and to get a glimpse of the structure and the coherence in writing.

Chalk-out a list of topics that intrigues you and then begin the selection process. Once the list is made, begin eliminating the topics from the list until you are sure about the final one. Eliminate the topics on the basis of their relevance and your inclination towards the area. This will help you to figure out your niche and make you more determined towards your writing. We definitely recommend you to write on legal issues in the laws that you would be interested in specializing in the future.

Now that you have one broad idea from the long list of topics, the next step would be to get as specific as you can. Be extremely specific with the topic on which you want to write, unless you are writing on a multi-faceted issue or area of law. One of the advantages of being specific is that you get an idea if the topic has enough substance to discuss and hence, worth writing. This process helps us to be sure about the topic and enables us to understand the scope of our prospective research piece. This process can be a bit time consuming and often leads to great chaos and confusion. More often than not, people realize that the topic has a very narrow scope or no scope at all and one cannot proceed with it. The rationale behind the exercise is primarily to find the contours of the topic. Once you have accomplished this step, the rest of the process becomes much easier.

Having decided the specific topic you aim to write about, the next important step would be to prepare a one-line question on that topic (or a hypothesis). It entails defining your research topic as a question, problem or a specific legal issue. This will enable you to research on all angles of the topic and even answer the prepared question in the affirmative or negative. All of this will ensure that the research paper comprehensively covers the relevant aspects relating to your topic.

Once you have decided a topic and its basic outline, the next step is to decide the type of research piece you want to write. The next part will help you in understanding the various types of legal pieces that are generally published.



# DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE FORMS OF WRITING

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Before beginning to write a piece, one must be clear in his/her mind about the kind of legal jurisprudence one is contributing to, i.e., whether it is a research paper, blog, case comment etc. This step is a very crucial one before actually putting the pen to paper. Knowing the type of legal writing you are about to do will help you in deciding the structure and the flow of the piece.

Usually, while taking a look at any publication guidelines, one can see that these styles are differentiated based on the word limit. However, all these styles of research writing are fundamentally different from each other and it is important for you to understand each of these before you begin to write. One similarity among all the styles would be that they all require an analysis of the relevant legal issue(s) and your own take on such issue(s).

**Blog Post:** A blog post is a small piece of writing generally analysing recent news, developments in the field and its background, impact, advantages and shortcomings. It is informative and helps in understanding any contemporary topic in a succinct manner. These pieces would ideally consist of at least three headings – a brief introduction, analysis of legal development/news and a conclusion. The authors are advised to keep a blog post concise and precise to enhance the effectiveness of their posts. For instance, *The CBCL Blog* accepts submissions of less than 1500 words excluding endnotes, which is also the standard followed by many other reputed blog platforms.

**Essay:** An essay is a short piece of writing involving the writer's personal opinion on the subject. The author has the chance to put forth his/her arguments about a particular subject and its shortcomings. It is more focused on your point of view on a particular aspect of a wide legal issue. An author would usually analyse a specific legal issue, commercial transaction or deal in an essay.

**Case Comment:** A case comment is an analysis of a specific case law and the author's opinion based on the analysis. It follows a particular structure such as facts of the case, contentions of the

parties, decision, reasoning of the court, critical analysis or appraisal and author's opinion/conclusion. However, authors should ensure that it is not a case summary or a brief.

**Legislative Comment:** It is an analysis of a legislative instrument like a new act, amendment, notification, regulations, guidelines or circulars introduced by the government or any regulatory body. It is similar to a case comment. The author first analyses the legislation, its background, its impact on the society, economy or legal regime and then provides his opinion about the same. The authors generally analyse an amendment in the existing legal framework.

**Research Paper:** It is an expanded form of an essay involving a detailed analysis of a perspective or an argument on a point. It is the legal thinking of the author backed by detailed research from reliable sources. A research paper normally has an abstract, which gives a brief explanation of the topic that the author would discuss through the course of paper. Unlike an essay, the research paper analyses multiple aspects of a legal issue or the topic. This could be in many forms, one could trace the development and origin of the law around a particular legal issue, engage in comparative study between jurisdictions or even make detailed suggestions on the law or way forward based on their research and evidence presented.

**Book Review:** A book review involves writing a personal & detailed discussion and analysis of any non-fiction legal book read by the author. The review is descriptive and presents a critical evaluation of the book. It is advisable to read a few book review pieces published in a reputed journal for a better understanding of its requirements.

Once you have selected the type of research piece you are interested in writing, try to prepare an outline that would generally include the subheadings, which you would like to discuss through the course of the paper. This will give you a roadmap of how you are supposed to go about working on the piece. Once the outline is prepared, you are all set to write the piece. Make sure you do not forget to set a timeline for your paper; else, it would be a never-ending process. The next part will explain the writing style to be followed while writing a research piece.

# WRITING STYLE

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Now that we are clear about the process that goes into picking a research topic and the difference amongst various kinds of research pieces, we will discuss as to what goes into the actual writing from the structure of the paper to the approach that has to be followed.

## A) ABSTRACT

Please note that this is specific to a research paper or long article. An abstract lets the readers have a gist of what your paper or article wants to convey, and is one of the deciding factors whether your paper will be read by them or not. It helps the readers to picture how your article will look like and further, helps them to remember the key pointers from your paper.

### What should your abstract include?

1. The **general topic** under study; the **context and background** of your research.
2. The **statement of the problem** that your research addresses, and the **central question** you will be addressing.
3. The main reason or the **rationale** behind your research. What is the **goal** of your research? Whether it's a contemporary issue, a critical comment, or are you resolving a dispute within the literature in your field?
4. Your **findings, results, or arguments** in summary.
5. The **significance** of your findings or arguments.
6. Specific **keywords** that are related to your issue and topic. These words will be helpful for a reader to search your article if it is indexed on an online platform.

### What should your abstract not include?

1. Make sure no new information is introduced in the abstract, which is not a part of your main body.
2. Unnecessary details about the methods used and the detailed discussion.
3. Undefined abbreviations, because it will lead to confusion for readers.
4. Unnecessary quotes, phrases or jargons.
5. General keywords that do not give any idea about the research piece.

**Suggestions:**

1. Begin writing your abstract after you have finished writing the paper.
2. Pick the content of your abstract from the Introduction, Methods, Results, and Conclusions section of your paper, so that nothing new is introduced in your abstract.
3. Make sure that there is consistency between the information provided in the abstract and the body of your paper.
4. Check to see if the final abstract meets the word count and guidelines of the target journal. An ideal abstract must not be more than 300 words for a research paper and can be even shorter for other pieces.
5. Your abstract should follow a flow, for example, purpose; basic study design, methodology, and techniques used; major findings; summary of your interpretations, conclusions, and implications. Don't get into the details of your research
6. Do not include abstract in a blog post unless specifically asked.

**B) STRUCTURE**

**(i) Introduction** - An introduction should :-

1. state the problem/issue;
2. describe why it is important;
3. describe what your paper will contribute to the discussion (state your thesis);
4. provide a road map to your paper; and
5. state your main argument(s).

Irrespective of the form of legal writing, your introduction should always attempt to answer three basic questions: **What? Why? and How?** Be specific about your topic and define **'What'** the background of your topic is, define key legal terms, and the theories that you want to address. Moving forward, define **'Why'** you want to address this particular topic, what new material you are providing to the readers that is different from the existing literature, and what answers are you looking for. Answering the **'How'**, tell the structure of your paper and what path will you be

following. This will help the readers make an imaginary map in a chronological order, and enable them to understand your paper in a better way.

The first few paragraphs should be used to get the reader's attention and to introduce the topic. In these first paragraphs, you want the reader to know that the topic is an important one. By the third paragraph, you need to describe what your paper will contribute to the topic and explain the theme of the paper. The final paragraph of the introduction should include a section-wise overview of the paper.

Additionally, in a research paper or long article, the introduction must tell the reader what your paper, in particular, will contribute to the issue, which is known as the **Thesis Statement**. This statement is the central argument that the author is trying to make, from which everything else flows. It establishes the purpose and position of your paper. It should show what evidence and reasoning you will use to support the answer to your research questions. Moreover, it must be concise, contentious and coherent. Having a thesis statement at the end of your introductory paragraph gives a good transition from the introductory paragraph to the main body of your paper.

In a case comment, the introduction may include details like the date of the judgment, bench, a very short factual matrix and basic idea of the subject matter of the case. In case of a legislative comment, the introduction may include the date of notification, the relevant ministry or the regulatory, factors highlighting the need of such legislation and its purpose. The introduction of a blog post and an essay is very short, hence, it directly addresses the thesis statement after providing a brief background of the topic.

*CBCL Tip: Divide your research piece in parts and explain the outline in the last paragraph of your introduction.*

***(ii) Main body of the paper -***

**1.** Explain the background of your paper and the various legal doctrines that you will be discussing:

Briefly summarise the relevant background aspects of the law. This part should be your substantial contribution to the existing knowledge; your achievement will be measured largely by the value-added. You can't prove your claim without explaining the background facts and the background doctrine, but do this as concisely as possible. This part may also provide the existing legal framework governing your topic. In a case comment or a legislative comment, you must provide the governing laws and earlier cases.

**2.** Highlight the problem or the legal issues:

After providing the background, you may discuss the key concerns, problems and the legal issues of your topic and how they arise. In this part, you must clearly highlight the importance of the issues and why such issues need to be addressed. Moreover, you may highlight the anomaly in a legal framework or an existing approach by analysing the sections, case laws and judicial approach. In a case comment, write whether you fully agree or fully disagree or partly agree and partly disagree with the judgement and the reasoning. In a legislative comment, you may address the legal problem it solves or creates.

**3.** Put forward your arguments, claims and explanation to counterclaims:

Be concrete in your theoretical arguments, and focus on your claims by indirectly addressing the counter-claims in your argument. The main body of your article should deal with the substantial discussion of your paper, and address the thesis statement that you mentioned in the introductory paragraph. This part is popularly known as 'critical analysis'. You may elaborate your arguments and refute counter arguments. You may also analyse the effect of the legal issue/problem on society, economy, legal framework, judicial approach, international law, etc. In a case comment, you must give your arguments and elaborate why you agree or disagree or partly agree and partly disagree with the judgment and the reasoning.

*CBCL Tip: Cross-jurisdictional analysis or comparative analysis or inter-disciplinary approach can get you some extra points.*

#### 4. Suggestions/Model:

After addressing and analysing a problem, it is mandatory that you suggest possible solutions. This solution can be in the form of an amendment, interpretation, international practice, etc. All the solutions, or any new framework that you wish to introduce, must be dealt with in a different paragraph. The solutions should be drafted in a manner which is consistent with the research questions, and should not introduce any new dimension to the paper. In a case comment or a legislative comment, you may give your own reasoning and interpretation to the judgement or the law accordingly.

*CBCL Tip:* Try to look at the judicial and legal approach of other countries on the issue of your research.

#### **(iii) Conclusion:**

The conclusion is a restated thesis, but with reasoning that is already explained above. Briefly summarise your points and lay down the answers that you established through this paper. In case there are no solutions and you want to question a particular policy or a research question, take a moment to point out why you think that more research is required in that particular area of law.

Suggestions and conclusions are different, don't mix them. Don't add your solutions in the conclusion section, instead make a separate paragraph for it. The conclusion should give a sense of finality by explaining how the paper has settled the questions raised in the introduction. Recap the *what*, *why*, and *how* raised in the introduction and establish your thesis.

#### **You should not:**

- Offer new arguments or essential information.
- Take up any more space than is necessary.
- Begin with phrases that signal the ending of the paper.

*CBCL Tip:* Read the relevant case laws, jurisprudence, theories, laws, online articles, research papers, reports, and expert opinions to improve your research. You may write a research piece on a specific issue of your moot court problem. You may also convert your law school assignment/project into a research piece with substantive changes to make it fit for publication.

## **C) MANNER OF WRITING**

1. **Avoid paraphrasing and narrative style of writing without substantiation** (case comment v. research paper v. essay): Avoid repetition in your academic writing, giving due consideration to originality. Don't extend your arguments to comply with the word limit, and be concise with your approach.
2. **No prolixity (use lucid language):** Redundant information should be avoided in order to reduce wordiness in your academic writing.
3. **Avoid passive voice:** Passive sentences should be avoided in academic writing because they can be vague about who is responsible for the action. Verb-tense consistency is important to have a consistent tense for a particular period.
4. **Avoid informal language:** You should try to avoid expressions that are too informal, unsophisticated, vague, exaggerated, or subjective, as well as those that are generally unnecessary or incorrect. The language must be academic and formal.
5. **Avoid quotations by people and from cases:** In academic papers and essays, you should avoid relying too heavily on quotes. When you want to refer to information or ideas from a source, it's often best to paraphrase, which means putting the passage in your own words. Case comment is an exception to this rule.
6. **Avoid repetition:** Repetition and redundancy can cause problems at the level of either the entire paper or individual sentences. For example: Don't restate the points that you have already stated, don't repeat your headings, and don't restate your research questions in the conclusion.
7. **Be mindful of the headings:** Headings and subheadings represent the key concepts and supporting ideas in the paper. They visually convey levels of importance. Differences in text format guide readers to distinguish the main points from the rest. Headings are generally bigger, if not more conspicuous than sub-headings. Try to be very creative with the headings and make it interesting for the readers. The main heading of your research piece should give a basic idea about your research and analysis. Read good research papers to understand how you can write interesting titles, headings and sub-headings. Also, it should not look like a project with one word headings.



8. **Avoid rhetoric:** A rhetorical question is one in a written text where the writer assumes that the reader knows the answer, or where the writer goes on to answer the question in the text. Such questions are inappropriate for academic writing, readers might not know the answer and the point being made could be more strongly and clearly expressed as a statement.
9. **Use paragraphs, not points:** Write in paragraphs and avoid writing in bullet points.
10. **Avoid Latin maxims, gratuitous comments, flowcharts, diagrams and statistics** in academic writing, unless they are necessary. If you are using statistics, make sure that you give proper context to your facts, and link it to the research question you are trying to address. The Latin words and phrases must be in italics.

*CBCL Tip:* Ensure that each preceding sentence logically connects to the next sentence with coherency. It is a very common mistake to skip connecting sentences, which greatly impedes readability.

# EVALUATION CRITERIA

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Each journal or a blog platform follows different evaluation criteria and one needs to make sure that the paper is in compliance with each of those before sending the research paper/blog for review. Here, we would be discussing some of the common criteria for your reference:

1. **Abstract** - Whether the abstract is clear, informative and self-contained, while still succinct?
2. **Student's Thesis** - Is the thesis or purpose of the student stated clearly? Is the subject well defined and properly focused, revealing thoughtful analysis? Is the thesis or purpose adequately supported? Your thesis must fulfil the parameters laid down under this heading.
3. **Grammar/Language** - The style of writing must be academic, not too simple and neither too complex language. However, it is not limited to errors in grammar and punctuation. It extends to erroneous syntax and the quality of language used. Also, the overall paper should make sense, and the sentence structure should be easy to comprehend, without excessive usage of technical jargon. Use simple but formal language.
4. **Structure/Logical Coherence** - First, on a macro level, the editors lookout for whether the manuscript has laid out a structure at the beginning, and followed it till the end. Usually, the introductory segment divides the manuscript into its various parts. These should be logically consistent. Secondly, on a micro-level, the contentions and arguments of the author should make logical as well as legal sense. If the logical or legal reasoning employed is incomplete, far-fetched, or entirely fallacious, this parameter is strictly evaluated.
  - i. Articulation and progression of major components or sections of the research piece.
  - ii. Maintenance of overall theme or point that gives the project coherence and significance.
  - iii. Clarity, precision, and economy of writing.
  - iv. Accurate use of academic language and writing conventions appropriate for the specific task.
5. **Contribution to Existing Literature** - To make your paper stand out, it must contain more than just a restatement of the existing laws, facts, and analyses. The analysis part of your

paper is evaluated under this heading. Your paper must add to the corpus of knowledge that already exists about a particular topic. That said, this parameter should not be interpreted as requiring the author to necessarily present hitherto unknown arguments or conclusions. Originality of approach is important; you should not paraphrase a solution that already exists as a part of that legal literature. In essence, while the topic may not be unique, the way it is dealt with must necessarily contribute to pre-existing literature.

6. **Contemporary Relevance & Context** - Your paper must deal with the contemporary relevance of your topic, and why do you think it is important to be discussed in the present times. This criterion is both objective (was this matter relevant over the past year, or extensively discussed?) as well as subjective (how is this legal grey area relevant in light of current affairs or recent judicial pronouncements?). Therefore, the authors must try to add facts and situations that they think are relevant in the present context.
7. **Referencing & Research** - Over-citation as well as a thorough lack of the same must be avoided. Books, journals, treaties and case laws should be preferred for a better quality and depth of the research. Even though it is an objective criterion, the use of quality authorities is important. Additionally, keep these pointers in mind :-
  - i. Use authentic websites, documents and case reporters.
  - ii. Good overall presentation of paper by maintaining uniformity.
  - iii. Appropriate pagination of reports/case laws, layout, margins, typographical accuracy, consistent and appropriate citation style, use of headings, etc.
  - iv. Correct attribution of sources through citations.
  - v. Do not use excessive footnotes/endnotes in the blog post. Insert hyperlink for any relevant laws, judgements and other material in the main body itself.
  - vi. You may use speaking footnotes to define or explain a term used in the main body of the research piece. You may also use speaking footnotes to cite a legal provision or your reasoning. However, some journals do not allow use of speaking footnotes.

All the sources used to be documented in a uniform manner. In simple words, your manuscript must follow a uniform citation so that the sources can be traced for the purpose of authentication. Following are the most widely accepted citation formats (click on the link).

- [20<sup>th</sup> Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation-The Harvard Law Review Association \(2015\).](#)
- [4<sup>th</sup> Oxford University Standard for the Citation of Legal Authorities \(OSCOLA\).](#)
- [Standard Indian Legal Citation.](#)



# PUBLICATION

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Having finished writing a piece, the last step would be to deliver it to the correct place, a correct publication forum. There are many blogs, journals and portals where one can get the research piece published. However, it is important to understand the relevance of getting your paper/blog published at a reputed forum. Depending upon the quality and the novelty of the paper, one must look for journals/blogs which serve the target audience of your writing.

*CBCL Tip: Ask your seniors, professionals and peers to review your research piece and give their suggestions. A third person review is sine qua non before seeking publication.*

Before sending your manuscript to any journal or platform, it is essential to look into various factors (not exhaustive):

- Ranking
- Theme
- Volume/Issue of the Journal
- Peer-review process
- Publication guidelines
- Open Access Options
- Audience/Viewer base
- Time for review
- Platforms where it is indexed

You must ensure that your writing complies with the publication guidelines of the targeted journal and the submission is made within deadline to avoid direct rejection. Blogs generally have rolling submissions; thereby, you can send your submission anytime of the year.

Some journals and blogs have specific themes, for example, the CBCL Blog and the NLIU Journal of Business Laws accepts submissions on any topic under the theme of ‘Corporate and Commercial laws’ including company law, securities law, capital markets regulation, banking and finance, taxation, foreign investment, competition law, commercial dispute resolution, contract and commercial law, and employment law *inter alia*. However, most law reviews

published by various NLUs and other law universities accept submissions on any contemporary legal topic. At this juncture, we also urge writers to avoid paid publications and defunct or fraudulent platforms. At the very least, one should seek journals and platforms with institutional or professional endorsement.

Lastly, we hope that through this Primer, our goal to facilitate and promote research and quality writing would be furthered and students would find it beneficial to understand the process that goes into writing a quality research paper. We wish you all the best for your future endeavours.

Happy writing.



Please follow our [\*FACEBOOK PAGE\*](#) and our [\*LINKEDIN PAGE\*](#) for more such updates and material. For more details about CBCL and our work, visit our web portal, [\*“THE CBCL BLOG”\*](#).