

Report Writing Guidelines

For Students

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What is a report?

A report is a systematic well organized document which defines, analyses and critically evaluate a subject leading to informed conclusions supported by evidence.

Planning & writing

Planning

1. Make sure that assignment brief is fully understood.
2. Do the research.
3. Organize the contents.

Writing

4. Critically examine the material gathered.
5. Prepare a draft.
6. Proof read the report before submission.

Layout of the report

Title page

The title page should normally include the name of the University, the name of the Faculty, title of the report, student ID, date, block/course (no & title), and the name of the tutor to whom it is being submitted.

Contents page

List of chapters /sections headings, and list of illustrations (tables & figures) with corresponding page numbers.

Abstract

A concise overview of the report that should be able to be read as a stand-alone section.

Main body of the report

There should be an introduction that explain what the report is about. It should also include, as appropriate, any methodology, results & discussions.

For the main body of the report, sub-headings to be used, should reflect the content of the material under discussion.

Conclusion

Captures the main findings & explanations from the report noting that neither new ideas nor citations should be included here. Conclusion may also include recommendations.

Referencing

In-text citations in addition to references list at the end of the report. Can adopt Harvard style.

Presenting data & illustrations

Tables, figures & diagrams should be: labelled, inserted and discussed, otherwise it will ad no value to the report and it will be waste of time.

Report writing checklist

Presentation	Check for	v or X
General layout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the title page clear, accurate and complete? • Is the contents page (if applicable) clearly laid out and accurate? • Do you have Margins of 2.5 cm on the four sides of the page? • Are your lines double-spaced between paragraphs, One and a half spacing? • Are all pages numbered? • Have you avoided unnecessary use of bold, italic and color type? • Have you used a standard font (Times New Roman.), Type size should be 12-point for body text, 14-point for subtitles, 16-point for titles and 18-point for section headings? 	
Text organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the introduction show understanding of the question? • Are all the sentences complete? • Are all the paragraphs adequately developed? • Do all the sections (if appropriate) have clear headings? • Are tables and figures properly integrated into the text? • Are all tables and figures titled, with source added in reference page? • Is there a clear and adequate conclusion or summary? 	
Coherence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does it all make sense? (especially to another person) • Do sentences, paragraphs and sections run together smoothly. • Is your language as concise as possible Grammar, spelling & punctuation? • Have you carefully checked for the grammar mistakes you tend to make? • Have you used verb tenses consistently? • Have you used the spellchecker? • Have you checked the spelling yourself? • Does your punctuation make your writing easier to read? • Have you checked your use of commas? 	
Referencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are all your sources always acknowledged? • Is your referencing accurate and consistent? • Is your list of references complete and in the correct format (Harvard style)? • Do all your references appear in your list of references • Are all the references cited in text? 	
Style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you avoided colloquial language? • Is your language as clear and as concise as possible? • Is your vocabulary varied, but always appropriate? 	
Overall impression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you answered the question/fulfilled the task? • Is everything relevant • Do you understand everything you've written? • Are you pleased with it? • Paper: Single-sided copies on white, A4-size paper should be submitted. • Pagination: Each page of the manuscript, including all blank pages, and pages with photographs, tables and figures should be assigned a number. • The following pagination plan may be used: • For the preliminary pages, use small Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, iv, etc.). The title page does not have a number but counts as page. • For the remainder of the manuscript use Arabic numbers (1, 2, 3, etc.). • Figures, tables and other illustrations should be titled as well as numbered (example – Figure 1 “The title of the figure.”). 	