

Report Writing



A report is a form of writing that is organised around identifying and examining issues, events or findings. The key to report writing is informing the reader about all relevant issues. The situation will be described and recommendations given from your findings.

Report format

There are different types of reports, therefore it is important to **check with your lecturer** which type is required. Each major heading begins on a new page. Write in third person (*no I, me, we, you* etc. unless directed by lecturer). A standard report has the following:

- Title Page
- Executive Summary/Abstract
- Table of Contents
- 1. Introduction
- 2. Findings/Discussion
- 3. Conclusions
- 4. Recommendations
- 5. References
- 6. Appendices

Title Page

- ◇ Choose a specific and focused title.
- ◇ Position the title about a third of the way down the page with:
 - ⇒ Title of report
 - ⇒ Who the report is prepared for (lecturer)
 - ⇒ Author of report (yourself including ID number)
 - ⇒ Due date

Executive Summary/Abstract

A useful summary condenses the essence of the report so the reader can quickly grasp the reports *aims, main objectives, main findings* and *recommendations*. The aim of the Executive Summary/Abstract is to describe the 'highlights' of the report.

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Table of Contents

- ◇ Similar to a contents page, this is a numbered list of contents.
- ◇ Being numbering at the introduction.
- ◇ Sub-sections are numbered with decimal points e.g. 4.1, 4.2 etc.
- ◇ Roman numerals can be used for page numbers for the Executive Summary and Table of Contents.

Introduction

This section states the purpose of the report, who it is for, the date it was due and defines its parameters.

Findings

Here you present information you have discovered from your research. All information must be backed up by evidence you have found in your research.

The report needs to be written in a logical sequence so it is clearly understood by the reader. Do not talk about issues that are not relevant to your topic.

Label all pictures/figures and reference them in the Appendix. Always refer to the pictures/figures in your discussion.

Conclusions

Sum up what you have said in your findings. The conclusions must be based on your Findings/Discussion. *Do not* introduce any *new material* here.

Recommendations

Based on your Findings/Discussion and Conclusions, make some recommendations. These should be:

- ◇ Action oriented.
- ◇ Brief and achievable.
- ◇ Related logically to Findings/Discussion and Conclusions.
- ◇ Numbered if there are several recommendations.
- ◇ Arranged in order of importance.

References

- ◇ All ideas from other people's work should be acknowledged to avoid plagiarism.
- ◇ Use APA referencing format.
- ◇ In the text of the report, the author is acknowledged in a citation with their last name and year of publication e.g. (Author, year).