



REPORT WRITING

REPORT WRITING

- Being able to communicate effectively in a written form is an **ESSENTIAL** requirement
- Simply being able to do the work is not enough.
- A good project can be ruined by a poor report.
- A bad project cannot be turned in to a good project by simply writing a good report

REPORT STRUCTURE

- Cover Sheet;
- Title Page (including Copyright declaration)
- Abstract
- Acknowledgements
- Contents Page(s)
- Chapter 1 (Introduction)
- MAIN BODY OF REPORT (i.e. several chapters)
- Chapters n (chapter on Critical Evaluation followed by final chapter on Conclusions & Further Work)
- References and Bibliography

REPORT FORMATTING

- Front Cover & Title Page
- The report should be word processed on plain white paper and text justified on left and right.
- Left margin 40mm; Right margin 25mm; Top margin 25mm and Bottom margin 25mm.
- Line spacing single/One-and-half/Double
- Direct quotes from external sources should be indented inside both left and right margins within quotation marks(“....”).

PAGE NUMBERING

- Page numbering should start with Chapter 1.
- Pages numbered consecutively through the main text.
- Page numbers shown centrally at the bottom of the page in the bottom margin.
- Tables, Figures & Diagrams should be numbered consecutively within chapters: table 1.2; figure 2.3; diagram 5.4; etc.
- Pagination of appendices should be continuous but distinct from the main text, e.g. A1, A2, A3,..., B1,B2,B3,..

CHAPTERS

- There should be no Chapter or Report headings at the top of each page.
- Each new chapters should start on a new page.
- The text should be organised as a sequence of numbered chapters.
- Within each chapter, the material should be broken down into sub- sections with their own sub-heading; e.g. 1.1; 1.2; 2.2, 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3; etc.

HEADINGS

- Avoid having a sub heading near the bottom of a page.
- Headings and titles should be printed in bold characters.
- Underlining/underscoring should not be used for headings
 - and should be used in the rest of the body of the text with considerable restraint.

ABSTRACTS

- This should be one page only.
- It should be between 250 and 400 words in length.
- It should be written after the report has been finished.
- It should highlight to the intended reader the main features of the project and any conclusions reached.
- It should be self contained and self explanatory.
 - What the project is about.
 - main techniques and methodologies used.

CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

- Introduction to your PROJECT not the topic
 - How the problem arose
 - The aims and objectives of your project.
 - The approach you intend to adopt.
 - The scope and limitations of the project.
- Framework of the report.
 - The purpose of each chapter and its main features should be stated.
- The evaluation and discussion of results should await the main body of the report.

MAIN BODY

- Number & nature of chapters will vary from project to project.
- There can be a literature review chapter OR it can be threaded through several chapters - depends upon the project (talk to your supervisor about this).
- There should be a chapter giving background to the project. It will :-
 - describe the specific problem being tackled,
 - state the objectives of the project (if they changed during the project the justification must be given)
 - the methods being used to achieve them. The choice of method used should consider what the alternatives were and why the one you chose was selected.

OTHER CHAPTERS

- **Developmental projects will have chapters dealing with:-**
 - **Analysis: Current System; Required System Spec.**
 - **Design, etc.**
- There should also be chapters which involves a theoretical discussion about the different aspects or topics within the project.
- A chapter on critical evaluation of the project must be included.

CONCLUSION

- The conclusion should summarise and assess the work:
 - what has been achieved;
 - emphasise the main points; point out any limitations.
 - make recommendations for further work.
- The conclusion should not raise any new issues (other than suggestions for further work).

REFERENCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

- **References**– Alphabetical listing of references to the format given above for all sources cited in the report.
- **Bibliography**–This is a further list of references that you have read and found to be of assistance in your project.
 - This section should contain books that have been used extensively as part of your project but have not been explicitly cited/quoted or paraphrased in the report.
 - The references in this section should be followed by additional comments of your own explaining the relevance of the

APPENDICES

- Contains further supporting detail that is of a more technical nature than required for the main body of the report
- Appendix A should deal with project management.
- Other Appendices - Screen Designs, questionnaires, summary results of surveys, program designs etc.
- Do not include program listings
- Hand programs in on disks or technical documentation to supervisor.

ADVICE ON WRITING

- Start early
- Draft the structure in terms of chapter and section headings before starting to write (cf writing a program).
- Print out copies of draft do not edit on screen.
- Always always keep backup copies of report