

## 4th year Projects: Final Report

### **Guidelines for the Final Report**

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At the end of your project you must write a full report of your investigation.

**The requirements:** Different departments require reports of different lengths, so check your departmental guidelines for the particular requirements of your report.

The **purpose** of the final report is:

- to present a clear logical report of your completed project, and
- to establish the significant outcomes of your project.

The **format** of the final report is similar to that of the progress, or preliminary, report with the conventional sections, Summary, Introduction, Conclusions, References and Appendices, framing the body of the report which is divided into sections with headings devised according to the work undertaken in your project. For example, for a research project in which the investigation has been an experimental study of a particular problem, then appropriate section headings may be: Literature Review, Experimental Investigation, Results and Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations. However, for a design project, the section headings may perhaps follow the steps in the design process.

The information which is typically included in the sections of a major project report is outlined below.

**Summary** – provides a concise overview of the substance of the report to give the reader a clear understanding of your investigation. It states the topic of your investigation, outlines the main stages of your investigation, and states the most important findings or outcomes of each stage. It also highlights the major conclusions of your investigation. As some readers read only the Summary of your report, it should be self-contained. It should not refer to figures or references.

**Table of Contents** - lists the contents of your report with clearly set out, numbered sections and subsections with their corresponding page numbers.

Number the various sections by the decimal point numbering system as follows:

- 1.0 Title of first main section
  - 1.1 First subheading
  - 1.2 Second subheading

- 2.0 Title of second main section
  - 2.1 First subheading
  - 2.2 Second subheading
    - 2.2.1 First division in the second subheading

You usually do not go beyond a three-number or two decimal point (eg, 2.1.1) sub-subheading as it gets too complicated. If you find that your text needs more subdivision than this, use bold side-headings - perhaps indent them and the text - but do not list these headings on the Contents page.

Number all the preliminary pages, ie, those preceding the Introduction (Title page, Summary, Acknowledgements, Contents page, List of illustrations, etc.) in lower-case Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, iv, v, etc.). The first page that is counted is the Title page, but do not label it as such at the bottom of the page; leave it blank. Number all the remaining pages of your report with Arabic numerals, making page 1 the first page of your Introduction.

Appendices (note the use of the words: it is one Appendix, two or more Appendices) should have a title describing the contents of the appendix (for example, Appendix 1: Sample Calculations) which you list accordingly in the Table of Contents. Do not just call them Appendix 1, Appendix 2, etc.

**Introduction-** provides the reader with the necessary background information to understand the rest of your report.

It usually includes:

- the background of the topic of your report or the problem which you investigated
- a convincing explanation about why this topic/problem needs to be investigated
- a clear statement of the aims of your investigation
- a brief outline of the structure of the report

**Middle sections** – present the details of your project. The way that you divide up these sections and devise headings will depend on the type of investigation which you conducted.

**Conclusions** - provides a clear summary of the major findings of your investigation. A possible way of presenting your conclusions is to list them as bulleted or numbered points, where you state the most important or strongest conclusions first and you work down to the least important and more tenuous conclusions. As this section summarises information included in the report, no new material appears in it.

**References** – should be listed as outlined in the Progress Report.

**Appendices** – can be used to provide additional information, as outlined in the Progress Report. You must refer to each appendix in the text of the report.

**Figures:** Each figure in your report must have a title and must be referred to in the text of the report. The source must be cited if the information in the figure does not come from your investigation.

For example,

Figure 3: Time-height cross section of lidar-measured