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PRIFYSGOL ABERYSTWYTH UNIVERSITY

How to write a...

Scientific report

Reports are widely used across various university disciplines, such as sciences, business, and professional studies, as they serve as a powerful tool for conveying information effectively.

Your report structure

Important!

Your report's format and rules will be based on what your department or subject requires. Check your department's guidelines or assignment instructions first.

The following outlines the standard scientific report structure:

1. Title

Summarise your work in a simple phrase or sentence.

2. Abstract or Summary

- The abstract is a quick summary of your project.
- In it, you talk about why you did the work, how you did it, what you found, and what you think it all means.
- You also touch on the main things you found out.
- It's a good idea to write this part after you've finished everything else in your report.
- *This may not always be required - check assignment instructions/with your tutor.*

3. Introduction

- This is where you introduce your report.
- You need to explain what your report is all about, what you're trying to achieve, and what you're hoping to discover.
- You might have a hypothesis instead of specific goals.
- You should also define any important terms or theories you'll be using so readers know what you're talking about.
- And don't forget to mention any limitations or boundaries to your research.

4. Methods

- In the methods section, you'll give details about how you collected the data and evidence for your report, including what tools and equipment were used.
- You'll also explain why you chose the method, address any issues you ran into during your research, and discuss the limitations of your methodology.

5. Results

- If you need to split up your report into results and discussion sections, make sure to keep the results section simple by just summarising your findings.
- Save the in-depth analysis for the discussion section.
- You can present your results using graphs, tables, or diagrams to make them easier to understand.
- Arrange your results in a logical order with clear titles and brief summaries. This will help the reader easily grasp what the visuals are showing.

6. Discussion

- This part is where you really analyse into the data you collected and your findings.
- You analyse what the results actually mean in relation to the goals and objectives (or hypotheses in a scientific report) you started with.
- Make sure to organise your thoughts in a logical way.
- Outline the actions you think should be taken based on what you've concluded.
- Make sure these actions are clear and specific.

7. Conclusion

- Here you'll want to wrap up your main points and findings without introducing anything new.
- Give a brief overview of what you discussed in your report, why it's important, and any key issues that came up during your research.
- You can also suggest ideas for future research or ways to improve on your current study.
- Tie everything together neatly before you finish up.

7. References

- Lists all referenced sources.
- Follow your departmental/module handbook's referencing style.
- Contact your Subject Librarian for referencing advice.