



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Academic, Industry & Digital Skills

Week 6

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Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, you will be able to:

- Understand the fundamentals of report writing
- Learn how to structure a report
- Format a report professionally using MS Word.



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Report-Writing – The Basics

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Academic Reports

- The most appropriate software to use for an academic report is **MS Word**.
- An **academic report** is usually written in the **third person** in order to be **objective** rather than subjective.
- Relying less on personal thoughts and more on facts lends credibility to your work and alleviates instances of bias, giving it a stronger focus.

Academic Reports

- When preparing to write a report, it is essential to **identify the main requirements**.
You must be clear about what areas your lecturer wants you to cover. These will then determine the organisation of the report.

Report-Writing

Reports are informative and fact-based

A report is a **formal document** therefore you need to ensure your writing style is appropriate.

- Academic reports are usually written using the 'third person'. This means avoiding the use of personal language, such as: I, me, we (1st person) and you and yours (2nd person)
- Include headings and subheadings, tables and graphs
- The use of bullet points is acceptable for reports

*Always refer to the assessment brief for guidance. If there is anything you do not understand, please ask your lecturer.

Report-Writing

- An academic report will always contain **references** and be written in **clear and precise language**.
- It should be **free from spelling and grammatical errors**.



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Report Structure

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First things first – Title Page

- Your Name
- Student Number
- Module Name and Code
- Title of Report
- Lecturer's Name
- Submission Date
- Word Count

Second Page: AI Acknowledgement Statement

I acknowledge the use of [AI Tool] [(AI Tool url)] on [Date] to [Purpose my work]. I used the prompt(s):

1. [Prompt]
2. [Prompt]
3. [Prompt]

I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated text as my own work. I confirm I have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used before, and after the use of AI tools which I may be asked to provide in evidence.

I confirm that I have not used any AI tools in the research and creation of this assignment. I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated materials as my own work. I confirm I have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used, which I may be asked to provide in evidence.

Executive Summary

An **Executive Summary** is a brief summary of the report. Your executive summary should state:

- **Why** the report has been written (i.e. the question or problem it is addressing).
- **How** the study was undertaken and **what the main findings were**.
- The **significance of the findings**. Be specific and precise to give the reader a succinct understanding of the main points without reading the entire report.
- The executive summary should be on its own page and is usually written as a single paragraph with no indentation.

Table of Contents

- This should be on a **separate page** to the executive summary. It helps the reader to locate specific information, and shows which topics are covered in what order. Any figures and tables included in the report should also appear here.

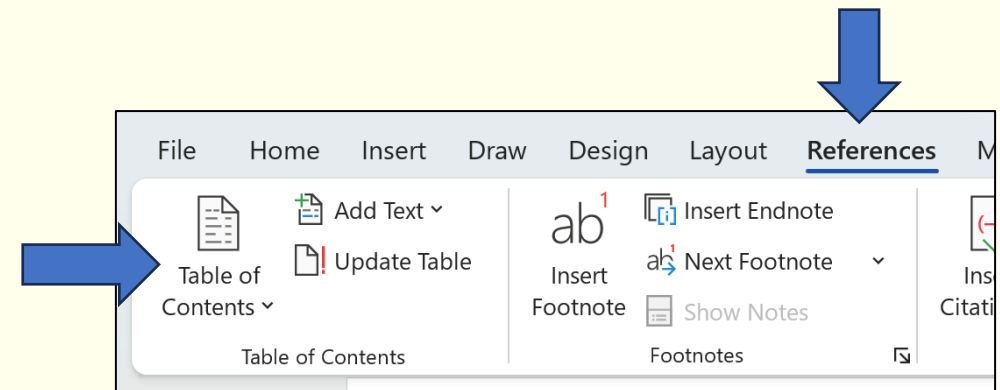
*Please note, the next slide is an example only. You should always read the task description within your assignment brief. If there is anything you do not understand, ask your lecturer to advise.

Table of Contents – Example

Executive Summary	2
1. Introduction	4
2. Main Body	5
2.1 Heading 1	5
2.2 Heading 2	5
2.3 Heading 3	6
2.3.1 Sub-Heading	6
2.3.2 Sub-Heading	7
2.4 Heading 4	8
2.4.1 Sub-Heading	8
2.4.2 Sub-Heading	9
2.5 Heading 5	10
2.5.1 Sub-Heading	10
2.5.2 Sub-Heading	11
2.5.3 Sub-Heading	11
3. Conclusion	12
4. Recommendations	13
Reference List	14
Appendices	16
Appendix 1: Heading	16
Appendix 2: Heading	17

Instead of creating your own Table of Contents manually, **MS Word** provides built-in templates that you can use.

You can find these under **References** → **Table of Contents**.



Introduction

- Your **Introduction** should be on another page.
- There are usually **three** aspects of an introduction:

It provides **background/context**, states the **purpose** and **aims** of the report, and outlines **what the reader can expect to find**.

Main Body

- This differs according to the type of report, but covers the following questions:
 - Who?
 - Why?
 - Where?
 - When?
 - What?
 - How?

The **main body** of a formal report would include all the information necessary to back up the validity and reliability of your findings and conclusion, presented systematically.

Conclusion

- Your **Conclusion** should be brief but long enough to get your point across, drawing together key discussion points that have already been raised.
- You **should not introduce any new discussion points or ideas**, and should rely only on facts taken from the main body of your report and the conclusions that can be drawn from these, rather than any speculative actions.
- The most important conclusion should be presented first.

Recommendations

- These should flow straight from the conclusions, and once again, the most important recommendations should be established first.
- If there are multiple **recommendations**, these may take the form of **bullet points**.

References

- Any sources or works that have been referred to in your report should be gathered into a list and referenced accurately, so that the reader is able to easily find these for themselves.

Top Tip!

- Once you have finished writing your report, proofread your work to make sure that it reads well, features all of the necessary aspects, and is free of grammar, spelling and punctuation mistakes.

Appendices

- **Appendices** should include *relevant supporting material* that may be too cumbersome to include in the main body of the report.
- For example, tables, graphs, charts, questionnaires, interview questions.
- Appendices should be kept to a minimum and only contain reference materials illustrating and supporting arguments fully made in the main body of the work.

Word Count

- Title Page
- AI Acknowledgement Statement
- Executive Summary
- Table of Contents
- Introduction
- Main Body
- Conclusion
- Recommendations
- References
- Appendices

- The sections highlighted in **green** are **included** in the word count.
The sections highlighted in **red** are **not included** in the word count.
- In some modules, your lecturer may **not require an Executive Summary**.
There may also be cases where the **Conclusion and Recommendations** are combined into a single section.
- Please **check with your lecturer** to confirm the specific requirements for their assignments.

Purpose and Audience

- If you consider the **purpose** and the **audience** the report is intended for, you can be confident that the report will fulfil its needs.
- There are different ways of writing a report depending on the topic, purpose and audience. There are also discipline-specific conventions.
- **The main thing to remember is that you must follow the brief you have been set.**

Remember...

- **Reference, Reference, Reference!**



- Remember that regardless of which method of assessment you are required to use, you must acknowledge any instances where you use someone else's words, ideas, images or research in your own work.



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Reports and Essays in Comparison

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Reports

- Formally structured
- Informative and fact-based
- Written with a specific purpose and reader in mind
- Written in a style appropriate to each section
- **Always include section headings**
- Can include bullet points
- Can include tables or graphs
- Offer conclusions
- Offer recommendations for action
- Include in-text citations and a reference list

Essays

- Semi-structured
- Argumentative and idea-based
- Not written with a specific reader in mind
- Written in single narrative style throughout
- Usually do not include sub-headings
- Usually do not include bullet points
- Usually do not include tables or graphs
- Offer conclusions
- Include in-text citations and a reference list