



Harper Adams
University

Guide to Report Writing 2016/17



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1. About this guide

Frequently, at university, an assignment will require students to produce an answer in the form of a report. Similarly, at work, reports are often used to address a particular issue or to consider the findings of some research.

This guide aims to support students to write good quality, well set out reports and to address some of the frequently asked questions about report writing at Harper Adams University.

This guide contains generic guidelines for writing reports; read the assignment brief carefully and look at departmental guidelines for sector specific formats.

Using the guide.....

This guide has been divided up into sections to examine all the elements of producing a report. It will consider:

Layout: How to structure a report to include the correct sections

Preparation and Planning: things to consider before starting

Presenting data and illustrations: tables, figures and photos

Writing the report – essential characteristics: Useful tips for writing summaries, introductions, main text and conclusions

Getting it right: looking at the 'little things' that trip students up. Addressing FAQs.

Checklist: a simple list to check that everything is in place before hand-in

So what is a report?

A report addresses a particular subject or issue. It uses information and/or data that may be historic or current or a mixture of both. Within a report there will be description; analysis; and critical evaluation leading to informed conclusions supported by evidence.



How does a report differ from an essay?

“A report is a statement of an investigation or of any matter on which definitive information is required.” (Oxford English Dictionary, 2008)

“Essays are an intellectual exploration of a topic involving looking at different arguments and evidence and developing the writer’s perspective.” (Plymouth University, 2011, p1)

To compare reports and essays, look at Table 1 which outlines the main differences between the two styles of presentation.

Table 1 Differences between Reports and Essays

<p>Report</p> 	<p>Essay</p> 
Formal structure	Structure can be left to the discretion of the writer but normally has an introduction, main text in paragraphs and conclusion
Defined sections with headings, including, as required: Methodology, Results/findings, Discussion/evaluation (See Section 2: Layout)	Does not contain subheadings (unless specifically asked for by the tutor). Different points are written as paragraphs
Commences with a Summary or Abstract before the Introduction	Commences with an Introduction; there is no Abstract or Summary
Systematically defines and analyses a subject or problem	Discusses, explains, analyses, interprets or evaluates a topic
Used to communicate the results or findings of a project/piece of research, scientific research or business reporting	Used to develop points or arguments in depth via a sequence of paragraphs (discursive writing)
Different sections may require different styles of writing throughout, depending on their purpose, but represent a continual 'argument'.	Same writing style is generally maintained throughout
May include tables, figures and illustrations	Often though not exclusively, no illustrative material accompanies prose.
Information may be recorded in bullet points in sections where relevant to do so; should be linked by prose.	Written as a narrative in continuous prose
May make recommendations for future actions	Very unusual to make recommendations although conclusions will be drawn

2. **Layout:** how to structure a report

Reports are written for different audiences and consequently their exact layout may vary. Specific industries or institutions will have their own 'house style'; however, as a general rule the following common elements should be present:-

Title page	Title of report, student ID, Module reference number and title, Module tutor or leader, date, word count
-------------------	--

Contents page	List of chapters/section headings with corresponding page numbers ; list of illustrations (tables and figures separately); list of Appendices
----------------------	--

Summary Not numbered	Also known as an Abstract . An overview, stand-alone section. See Section 5: Writing the Report
---------------------------------------	--

1.0 Introduction	What the report will be about. See Section 5: Writing the Report
-------------------------	--

2.0 Main body	Includes as appropriate, any methodology, results and discussions. Includes numbered sub-sections. See Section 5: Writing the Report
----------------------	--

3.0 Conclusion	May include also recommendations. See Section 5: Writing the Report
-----------------------	---

References Not numbered	Precise details of the work of others (Refer to HAU Guide to Referencing)
--	---

Appendices	Lengthy and detailed material that informed the report but does not necessarily need to be read. Can be used to check for accuracy. Includes statistics, questionnaires, interviews, etc. Each appendix is numbered but the section itself is not.
-------------------	--

Always check the assignment brief for any variations in layout.

3. Preparation and Planning: From receiving the assignment brief to hand-in

“Failing to plan is planning to fail.”

(Variously attributed to Benjamin Franklin, Winston Churchill and Alex Lakein)

Before any work can begin, the scope or ‘terms of reference’ of the report need to be clearly understood.

Key questions to ask:

- What is the report about?
- What will it cover?
- What is outside the brief?
- How does this define the research?

(heacademy, 2005)

Time Management

It is essential to allow enough time to complete all the stages in writing a report ahead of the deadline, including slippage time to allow for unforeseen circumstances.

Time needs to be allocated to each of the stages in planning and writing the report. These include:

- Preliminaries
- Research
- Organising the content
- Writing draft versions
- Completing the task

Use an organising system to allocate times/days to each stage of the process; these include:-

- Outlook Diary
- Paper Diary
- Phone App
- Gantt Chart
- Event Schedule Planner (Word – Template - Office 2013)
- Various Excel planners

The Planning and Writing Process – a six stage model for completing the task

Study the model on the following page(s) to complete the report planning and writing process in timely fashion.

The Six Stage Planning and Writing Process

Planning:

Stage 1: Clarifying the brief

- Make sure that the assignment brief is fully understood.
- What are the instructions?
- What was said at the assignment launch?
- If unsure, ask for clarification.

Stage 2: Doing the research

- Check the reading list for the assignment and any additional departmental reading lists.
- Be specific about what needs to be researched/analysed.
- Use Find it @ Harper and other recommended data bases.
- If unclear, ask the library staff for help in using the databases and research tools.
- Do not rely on the Internet – check the validity of the sites used.
- Use peer reviewed journals rather than the popular journals (although these can be a good starting point).
- Read summaries and assess usefulness.
- Don't forget books and e-books! The library has an extensive range!
- Look for key words.
- Check the contents and indices of books for relevant ideas.
- Ensure when making notes, all the details of each reference are recorded for the reference list.

Stage 3: Organising the content

- Re-examine the assignment brief.
- Review the notes made and group under the various headings.
- Be ruthless – discard anything that is not relevant or does not address the brief.
- Avoid padding.
- Make sure ideas are paraphrased into own words – avoid 'copy and paste'.
- Make sure the order is logical.

Writing:



Stage 4: Analysis

- Don't be narrative and simply describe the information/data.
- Critically examine the material gathered.
- What evidence has been found to make or substantiate the points?
- Are there any contrasting/conflicting theories, ideas or arguments?
- Does any of the research have limitations?
- Does the material relate to the assignment brief task?
- On balance, is there a compelling conclusion?

Stage 5: Drafting

- Follow the correct report structure for reports at Harper Adams University (see Section 5: Writing the report - essential characteristics).
- Be simple and concise; don't include superfluous words and unnecessary detail.
- Avoid jargon but use correct technical terms.
- Include and make reference to tables, graphs and illustrations as appropriate.
- Include sub-headings for greater clarification.
- Read the draft and see if it is possible to remove 25% of the words without changing the meaning.
- Check assignment brief to ensure all aspects covered.
- Make changes – redraft.

Stage 6: Proof reading

- Use the spelling and grammar checker; be careful to set it to the UK version.
- Read the report out loud – this helps check punctuation and that sentences and paragraphs make sense.
- Check all names, businesses, individual places are consistently presented and spelling accurate
- Acronyms (see Section 6: Getting it right)
- Check all ideas and work by other authors have been cited in the text and correctly referenced in the reference list.
- Check all tables, figures and illustrations are numbered, have titles and the source is acknowledged.
- Ensure that text is paraphrased (own words) and there is no 'copy and paste'.
- Ensure, where necessary, quotation marks are in place and correctly cited.
- Check layout, contents page, page numbers, labelling/captions.

4. Presenting data and illustrations: tables, figures, diagrams and photographs

In some assignment reports, it is part of the assessment to include a word-processed table or a series of graphs or charts. In other cases, a diagram, graph, table or photograph can often save many words and display information in a relevant, clear manner that aids understanding. However, unless the illustration is labelled, introduced and then discussed, it *does not add value* to the report and is a waste of time!

Remember the 'illustration sandwich': Introduce -> Insert illustration -> Discuss

4.1 Tables

- Tables are used to present results or summarise written information, for example, to compare and contrast two processes. In certain circumstances, particularly if reporting interviews, Speech Bubbles or Word Clouds may be used; check assignment brief to see if this is acceptable for the report.
- Tables usually support or illustrate points in the text.
- **The caption (title) is above the table.**

For example:

Numbered in sequence for ease of reference in text

Clear, full and explicit title **ABOVE** the table

Units clearly identified & high up in table to avoid repetition

Table 2 UK bat species population trends summary table, 2013

Bat Species	Survey type	No. sites trend analysis	Base year	Long term trend (since base year) %	Average annual change %
Whiskered /Brandt's	Hibernation	189	1999	31.4	2.0
Natter's	Hibernation	415	1999	93.6	4.8
Soprano Pipistrelle	Field	561	1999	19.2	1.3
Brown long eared	Roost	143	2001	12.4	1.0
Daubenton's	Waterway	821	1999	4.5	0.3

(Source: Adapted from NBMP Survey results, 2013)

Numbers to be compared presented in columns

Source clearly stated and offset to right above title

4.2 Figures

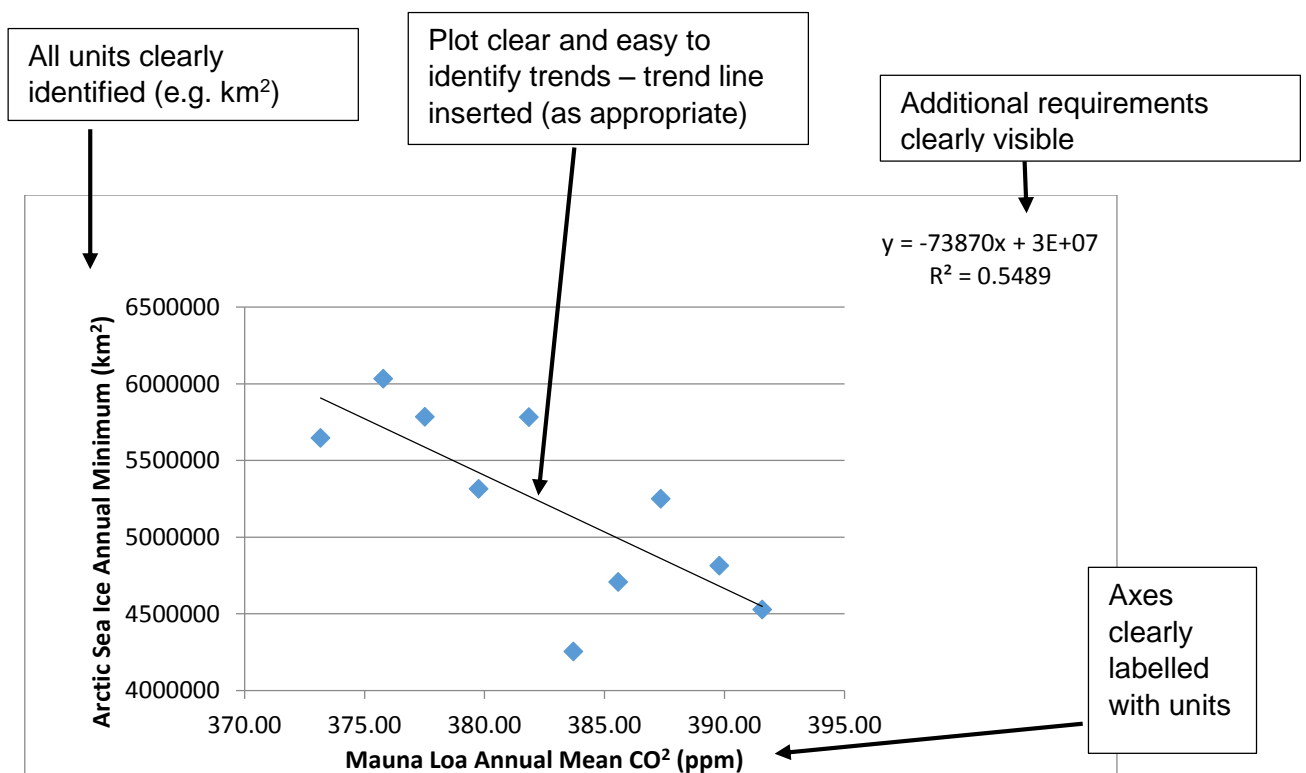
These include everything that is *not a table* – graphs, charts, diagrams, photographs.

The type of figure chosen will depend on the nature of the data and the purpose for which it is to be used.

- Numerical data can often be more clearly understood as a graph or *chart*, for example line, scatter plot, histogram, bar chart, and pie chart.
- Processes can often be made more explicit by a flow chart.
- Complicated machines or interrelationships lend themselves to diagrams.
- Photographs can illustrate many things such as diseases, landscape features or machinery; they can be of great use if annotated.

Whatever type of figure used, the caption (title) goes below it and below the source.

4.2.1 Charts



(Source: Adapted from NOAA ESRL, 2012)

Figure 1 Relationship between Mauna Loa Annual Mean CO₂ (ppm) and Arctic Sea Ice Annual Minimum (km²)

Clear, full and explicit title **UNDERNEATH** the figure

Source clearly stated and offset to right, above title

4.2.2. Photographs

A photograph should be included to illustrate a point not to look pretty!

Photographs can be annotated or labelled to add clarity or explain points or processes.

They are labelled as **Figures** (in the past they were called plates which reflected how they were taken).

Copyright must be checked before a photograph is included.

The source/photographer must be acknowledged; if the photo is the author's own this should be stated. (See HAU Guide to Referencing).

4.2.3 Diagrams

These may be compiled from information to present it in an easier format e.g. a flow chart of a process.

Diagrams may also be illustrative e.g. the workings of an engine or a body part such as the heart.

Copyright must be checked for using diagrams from certain organisations; be careful if copying from the internet.

The source of the diagram if not the author's own must be acknowledged.

4.3 Equations

See Section 6: **Getting it Right**, page 14

4.4 Listing

Tables, figures and equations should be listed after the contents.

Tables should be numbered sequentially throughout the report.

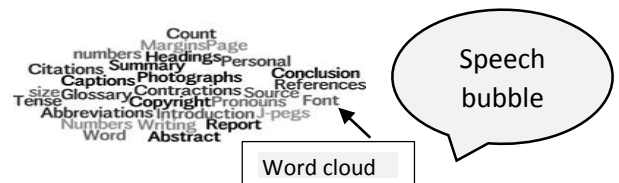
Figures should be numbered sequentially throughout the report.

4.5 Word count for illustrations

Captions for tables and figures do **NOT** count in the word count.

Tables that are summaries of written work **DO** count in the word count. Alternative writing formats such as Speech Bubbles and Word Clouds **DO** count in the word count

Tables that contain data do **NOT** count in the word count.



5. Writing the report – essential characteristics: useful tips for writing summaries, introductions, main text and conclusions

The Summary (also known as an Abstract):-

- ✓ Brings together all the essential elements of the report.
- ✓ Provides a concise overview of the main themes.
- ✓ Should be able to be read as a stand-alone section (for someone who doesn't have time to read the whole document – but your tutor will!).
- ✓ Should reflect the topic or question, the methodology, key findings and conclusions.
- ✓ Is not a detailed discussion – includes the bare bones.
- ✓ Citations/references should **NOT** be included.
- ✓ Is written in the **past tense** (e.g. data showed, research found etc.).
- ✓ Goes at the **start** of the report but is written **after** the report has been finished
- ✓ Is usually no more than 10% of the word count of the assignment (e.g. a 2000 word report has a summary of about 200 words) but check the brief for specific instructions for length.
- ✓ Is **NOT** numbered

The Introduction:-

- ✓ A good introduction should grab the reader's interest!
- ✓ It should explain what the report is about – this shows understanding of the brief.
- ✓ It should explain why the report is being written:
 - What is the background, history and current state of events?
 - What is known already?
 - What is the context/background against which the current report is set?
- ✓ It can include examples and interesting details.
- ✓ It should clearly articulate the scope of the report – what it will cover and importantly, if relevant, what will not be included. This is sometimes known as the 'terms of reference'.
- ✓ It should give an indication of how the material will be dealt with – a 'road map' of the report – what should the reader expect and in what order:-
e.g. "This report will analyse the relative advantages and disadvantages of the different operating systems." (Birmingham City University, 2008)
"Based on interviews, this report examines three problem areas." (Canberra University, 2013)
- ✓ It is written in the **present and future tense** (e.g. shall, will etc.).
- ✓ It should be about 8 – 10% of the length of the report (e.g. 2000 word report should have an introduction of 160 – 200 words)
- ✓ It is numbered 1.0 and comes **after** the Summary

The **main body** (do **not** call it this!):-

- ✓ Needs a good overarching title that reflects the subject of the report.
- ✓ Layout depends on the subject of the report; a scientific report will differ from a business report or topic review (See HAU Guide 'Writing up Science Based Practical Reports').
- ✓ Choose sub-headings that reflect the content of the material under discussion and create a clear structure and logical flow.
- ✓ Differentiate headings by using different sizes and /or capitals and lower case. Use the headings tool bar in Word. (See Headings and Notation in Section 6 **Getting it Right**, page 14). Whatever system used, be consistent.
- ✓ Outline the material researched then discuss and evaluate its significance/importance.
- ✓ Evaluate and critically review the material; not just what, when, where but also, how, why, what if, what next, so what?
- ✓ Discuss findings: layout depends on the assignment brief; findings can be outlined then discussed or each finding can be discussed as the report progresses.
- ✓ Ensure balance and use evidence to support ideas.
- ✓ Avoid using jargon or 'consultant speak'; keep it simple and straightforward but use technical terms appropriately.
- ✓ Explain acronyms and abbreviations.
- ✓ Be mindful of the word count; be concise – don't use superfluous language.

Table 3 Examples of superfluous words and alternatives

Superfluous words	Alternative
At this point in time	Now (Not nowadays!)
A large proportion	Many
Absolutely necessary	Essential
By virtue of the fact	Because
Was of the opinion that	Thought
In the absence of	Without
Very, totally, completely are often redundant i.e. they add nothing	

(Source: Adapted from writersservices.com, 2014)

- ✓ Include citations: everything that is not an original idea **must** have a citation which is fully acknowledged in the reference list (See HAU Guide to Referencing and Section 6 **Getting it Right**, pages 13 and 16).
- ✓ Do not 'over cite': in a paragraph, only if several authors' ideas are included does each sentence/point need to be cited; otherwise one acknowledgement will suffice.
- ✓ Don't plagiarise! Avoid 'copy and paste' and ensure that text is written in own words and that quotations of others' work are in quotation marks and properly cited and referenced. (See HAU Guide to Referencing).
- ✓ Write in the **present and past tense**.

The **conclusion**:-

- ✓ Is a relatively short section.
- ✓ **No new ideas** or evidence should be included.
- ✓ **No** citations or references should be included; it is the writer's ideas/decisions about the material researched.
- ✓ Captures the main findings and explanations from the report; a good discussion will make these points obvious!
- ✓ States what has been found and the evidence to justify this; does not simply repeat the findings.
- ✓ Can give recommendations for further action.

In an assignment report, it is **not necessary** to start each section on a new page; however, in some assignment briefs there may be a specific request to, for example, include the Summary/Abstract on a separate page or on the front cover. Read the brief!

This differs from a P.R.P or H.R.P where each chapter should start on a new page or the world of work where business/government reports start each section/chapter on a new page.

6. *Getting it right*: avoiding common mistakes and addressing FAQs

This section looks at common mistakes made in report writing and how to avoid them and addresses frequently asked questions from students.

Abbreviations: It is acceptable to abbreviate terms and names of important features or places within a report; however, the first time used, the name should be written in full with the abbreviation following in brackets. E.g. The Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT).

A note of caution – too many abbreviations in a paragraph and report can cause the reader to disengage from the meaning of the text.

If a lot of abbreviations are used it may be appropriate to include a list after the Contents Page. See Glossary

Acronyms: These should be written out in full first with the abbreviation following in brackets E.g. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

Once the acronym has been used, **be consistent**; do not go back to writing the name/term in full

Captions (titles): Each table or figure should have a title known as a caption. For tables this should be **above** and for figures it should be **below**.

Do **not** write 'Graph to show....' - it is obviously a graph!

Tables and figures should be numbered separately and in order from 1; numbers should be sequential throughout the report. Do not mix up the numbering for tables and figure.

Unless the data is the author's own, the source should be shown under the table or figure (offset to the right and above the title for figures). See Source (data) page 16.

Citations: Any idea that is included in the text must be acknowledged in a citation. If the whole paragraph is from one author, only one citation is needed; however, if more than one author's ideas are included, each sentence based on a different author must have a citation. (See H.A.U. Guide to Referencing)

- Contractions:** For academic reports where the answer is written in a more formal style, contractions should not be used, i.e. don't should be written as do not, can't as cannot, shouldn't as should not etc. Their use is acceptable in less formal writing and in some reports from businesses.
- Copyright:** Before including any kind of illustration, including photographs, copyright rules should be checked and adhered to.
- Equations:** Equations are included in a number of reports. They should be presented in the middle of the line/page and be numbered using a bracket e.g. (1) at the right-hand margin.
- E.g.
$$x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a} \quad (1)$$
- In the report equations should be referred to as either Eq. (1) or equation (1) but be consistent! (Monash University, 2007).
- There should be a list of equations on the Contents page.
- Font size & style:** Font size should be no less than 11. Report writing fonts may be specified in the assignment brief but if not, use sans serif such as Calibri, Arial Tahoma.
- Front cover:** Include:-
- Title of the report
 - Module number (and title) for which it was written
 - Student ID number **NOT** name
 - Tutor for whom written
 - Date report submitted
 - Word count
- Glossary:** In some reports, if a lot of abbreviations, acronyms or standard units have been used, a glossary can be provided after the contents page explaining the meaning of each.
- Headings & Notation:** All types of headings at the same level must be in the same format and size. They should **NOT** be underlined.

Use the Home tab on Word to differentiate between headings for different sections and to number using the decimal system.

E.g. **3. Environmental Impacts of Sea Bed Trawling (Font 16)**

3.1 Types of trawling mechanism – Type A (Font 13)

3.1.1 Impact of Type A on species vulnerability (Font 12)

3.1.2 Vulnerable locations – Type A fishing (Font 12)

To be able to cross reference, each major section of a report has a numbered heading; sub-sections generally use a decimal numbering system as shown above.

Insertions:

Any insertion into the report of text, tables, figures, 'Snips' etc. **must** be acknowledged with a source/citation and a reference.

The body of the report should be typed in Word. It is **not acceptable** to insert text as images or Snips or other formats.

Text (written work) must **not** be inserted as a J-peg in a report.

Text using translation software should be correctly cited and referenced

Screen shots of figures from Excel should **not** be used; charts should be copied and pasted with appropriate labels and sources.

Line spacing:

Unless stated otherwise in the assignment brief it is acceptable to use single line spacing; read the brief!

Margins:

Remember, an assignment has to be presented in a folder so margins should not be narrow, particularly the left hand margin; other margins should allow for marking and written feedback. Some assignment briefs may specify the sizes to be used.

Numbers:

Numbers under ten and at the beginning of sentences should be written in words; numbers over ten should be written in figures.

E.g. There were nine counties in the survey. Twenty three percent of riders had experienced back problems in the 350 riding schools surveyed.

Page numbers: Front cover should **not** have a number.

Guidance on pages numbering sections is in Appendix 1.

Personal Pronouns: Reports are written impersonally so personal pronouns - I, we, you - should **not** be used. E.g. 'It is thought that.....' **not** 'I think that....'

Only if the report is a reflective one, is it acceptable to use the first person; this should be checked with the brief.

Photographs: Photographs should be labelled as Figures and numbered sequentially with the other figures included in the report. (See also Copyright)

References: Should be after the Conclusion and before the Appendices (See HAU Guide to Referencing).

The Reference section does **not** have a number.

References should match the citations in the text. Material which has been read for background but not referred to should be in a *bibliography*.

Source (data): If the data in the report has been collected and analysed by the author of the report there is **no need** to write "author's own" as the source under any tables or figures compiled from it.

However, if the data is secondary data (i.e. collected by someone else), the source should be acknowledged under the table or figure; if the data has been adapted from secondary sources, this should be acknowledged.

The source acknowledges the person who collected the data **not** the person who compiled the figure so it should **NOT** be labelled 'Author's own'.

E.g. (Source: DEFRA, 2013)

(Source: Adapted from DEFRA, 2013)

Summary: This section may be referred to as an Abstract and should be able to be read in isolation from the report. As such, in academic writing it does **not** have a section number.

Tense: Different sections of the report require the use of different tenses. The Summary should be written in the past tense; the Introduction in the future; and the Main Body in the past tense.

Word count: Each assignment will have a **word limit** or a **word guide**; sometimes there will be a **page limit** instead.

A word limit is a limit and is non-negotiable; it is a myth that there is a tolerance of 10% either side!!!!

Work that exceeds the word limit will not be marked.

If there is a **guide** rather than a limit, it is generally acceptable to write **no more or less than 10% either side**; for postgraduates, in *exceptional circumstances*, this may be extended to 25% but this will be indicated in the assignment brief. Excessive amounts of text over the guide will not be marked.

Some assignments have a page limit; this will usually specify the margin size and the font size. It is generally **not** acceptable to use anything less than 'Moderate' margins and font size 11 in a page guide. Read the brief for specific instructions regarding the inclusion of the title page and/or reference page.

Table 4 Words included in the word count of a report

Count in	Do not include
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary/Abstract (text only)* • Introduction (text only) • Main body (text only) • Discussion (if applicable – text only) • Conclusion (text only) • Text displayed in tables and in other formats such as Speech Bubbles, Word Clouds, Snips etc. • In text citations <p>*Check assignment brief for any specific/additional instructions for word count for summary/abstract</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reference list • Appendices • Data in tables • Results in tables • Any figures (graphs, charts, diagrams) • Headings and Subheadings (Summary, Introduction etc.) • Captions (titles) for tables and figures

NB. Final year projects may have different expectations – check the HRP/PRP guide

References

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Academic Guidance Team: other useful sources, information leaflets and guides

Guides:

- HAU Guide to Essay Writing – contains command words and useful academic phrases from the Manchester University Phrasebank.
Very useful site. (<http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/>)
- HAU Guide to Writing Up Science Based Practical Reports
- How to Write a Briefing Paper

Information leaflets:

- Report Writing
- Summaries, Introductions and Conclusions
- Note Taking
- Paraphrasing
- Referencing and Citations
- Editing
- Proof Reading
- Managing your Word Count
- Writing Literature Reviews

On the Learning Hub

Academic Guidance has a Study Resource area on the Hub. On the Tool Bar go to

Student Information → Study Support → Study Advice

Study Advice

Welcome to the **Study Advice** resource area. The materials available can be accessed throughout your study at Harper Adams to support your academic and personal skills development.

The resource area is divided into eight topics. **Click on** an image to access the support materials or use the **topic area** menu on the right hand side.



[1. Getting started](#)



[2. How do I learn best?](#)



[3. Managing your time](#)



[4. Effective writing](#)



[5. Effective speaking](#)



[6. Maths and Numeracy Support](#)



[7. Preparing for exams](#)



[8. IT Skills](#)

Appendix 1

Formatting in Word

1.0 Page Numbers

- Show paragraph marks “Home tab then click ¶”
- “Insert tab then click Page Number” – choose required format
- Replace the standard page break with a next page section break -
 - “Page Layout tab then click Breaks/Section breaks/Next Page”
 - (the next page being the page where you want the numbering to start)
- Click in the header or footer where you have the page numbers a header and footer tools ribbon will automatically open then click to “Unlink” header/footer from previous
- Go back to your header/footer then right click on page number then “Format Number” and “Start at” where needed
- Delete numbers on previous pages

2.0 Contents Page (Table of Contents)

- Click on References Section of the Tool Bar
- Click on Table of Contents
- Choose Automatic Heading style as desired
- Table of Contents is inserted automatically
- Can modify for example, by removing number assigned to Content heading and type in a heading for Page Number. This can be manually changed to suit the chosen font style etc.
- To correct either section number or page numbers, click on Contents heading then click on Update Table
- From the menu, click category wish to update; either Update page number or Update entire table

3.0 Table of Figures/List of Tables

These should appear as **two separate lists** on the Contents page of a report

- Click on References section of the Tool Bar
- To the right of Tool Bar, click on Insert Table of Figures
- Look at tabs at the bottom; check Caption Label. Set to Figures, Click OK.
- Repeat for Tables – change drop down menu to Tables. Click OK.

If you have any problems please call IT Services on 01952 81 5555

Email: servicedesk@harper-adams.ac.uk

Appendix 2

Report Writing Checklist

Check your report against the following to ensure you have included everything and checked for errors and omissions:

Section / Presentation	Check for:	✓ or X
Title page	Does this include: Title? Module reference number & title? Module tutor or leader? Date? Word count?	
Contents	Are all the main sections listed in the right order? Is there a list of illustrations? Are the page numbers correct?	
Summary	Does this include: The subject/issue of the report? Any methods used? Findings? Conclusions reached? Any recommendations made? Is it written in the past tense?	
Introduction	Does this include: The terms of reference? (What it's about) The limits of the report if any? An outline methodology? (How it is to be dealt with) A brief background to the subject matter? (Why it's important) Is it written in the future tense?	
Main body with suitable title	Does it include: Relevant sub-headings to give a clear structure? The form the enquiry took? Any results/findings from research? The way any data was collected? Identification of key issues? Explanations for findings? Have the issues been critically evaluated? Have any personal pronouns been removed (I, we, you, us)	
Illustrations	Are diagrams clear and simple? Are they clearly labelled with tables labelled above and figures below? Are they numbered sequentially? Do they relate closely to the text? Have they been introduced and discussed?	

Section / Presentation	Check for:	√ or X
Conclusions and recommendations	Have the main ideas been drawn together Are the consequences of these made clear? Are further actions recommended? Has the inclusion of new information been avoided?	
References	Are the references in alphabetical order? Do the references conform to the Harper Adams Guide to Referencing? Has the reference list been checked for accuracy? Have all the reference types required by the assignment brief been included? Are all references cited in the text? Are all citations referenced in the list?	
Appendices	Do appendices include only supporting information? Does the reader need to read this information?	
Writing style	Is the language clear and concise? Are the sentences short and jargon free? Are the paragraphs tightly focussed? Has the passive voice been used (no personal pronouns)?	
Layout	Is each section clearly titled? Are titles consistent in font and size? Are numbered sections sequential?	
Presentation	Are the margins large enough for binding and feedback? Is spelling, punctuation and grammar accurate? Are names, businesses and places consistently presented and accurately spelt? Has work been paraphrased? Have all sources been acknowledged?	
Word count	Is the report within the word limit? Has the word count been checked against Table 4 on page 17	

(Source: adapted from heacademy, 2005)