

BEng-BSE Degree Programme

<http://ibse.hk/BEng-BSE.htm>



Workshop on Report Writing Skills



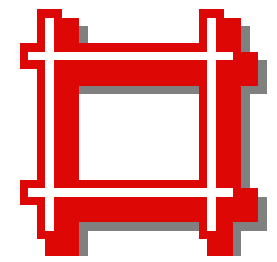
Apr 2019

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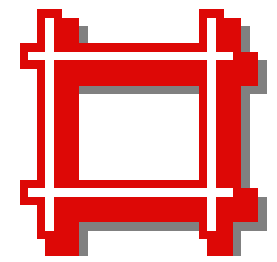
- 1. Introduction
- 2. Features of good reports
- 3. Structuring your report
- 4. Writing your report
- 5. Practical exercise





1. Introduction

- Objectives:
 - To highlight the important skills for FYP report writing
 - To explain the strategy for structuring & organising the report
 - To enable students to develop & write effective FYP reports
- Provide students with some guidance and encouragement at the writing stage

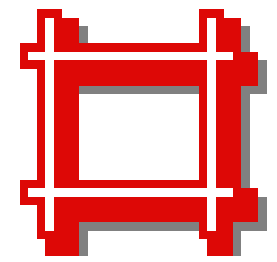


1. Introduction

- Key elements of report writing:
 - Preparation → Structure → Writing → Presenting
- The purpose of a report is to inform or **communicate** important information effectively to the reader
 - It's not just the writing part; it's planning and organizing the material so that it makes sense to the reader
- The report **CONTENT** is the key

Insightful reports that bring the findings to life





1. Introduction

- Different types of reports:
 - **Research report** (for FYP2 Applied Research Project)
 - **Design report** (for FYP3 Detailed Design)
- Draft report: seek guidance from supervisor
 - A working version of the final report
 - Should be sent to your supervisor for comments
 - Allow sufficient time for your supervisor

2. Features of good reports



- What makes a good/bad report?
 - Badly structured
 - Inappropriate writing style
 - Incorrect or inadequate referencing
 - Doesn't answer the brief
 - Too much/too little/irrelevant material
 - Expression not clear
 - Doesn't relate results to purpose
 - Unnecessary use of jargon



2. Features of good reports



- How are reports read?
 - Thinking about the reader & his/her expectation
 - Research on how managers read reports discovered that they were most likely to read (in order): the abstract or summary; then the introduction; then the conclusions; then the findings; then the appendices
 - You may think abstract or introduction is less important but they are actually often the places a reader gets their first impressions



2. Features of good reports



- Assessment criteria for **Research Report** (for FYP2 Applied Research Project)
 - Understanding of research purpose & research question(s)
 - Sound argument & logical approach
 - Report organisation & clarity
 - Innovation & creativity (e.g. original ideas)

2. Features of good reports



- Assessment criteria for **Design Report** (for FYP3 Detailed Design)
 - Effective design for BSE systems
 - Report organisation & clarity
 - Drawing skills (schematics, layouts, details)
 - Innovation & creativity (e.g. new design concepts)
 - Teamwork (collaboration & coordination)

2. Features of good reports

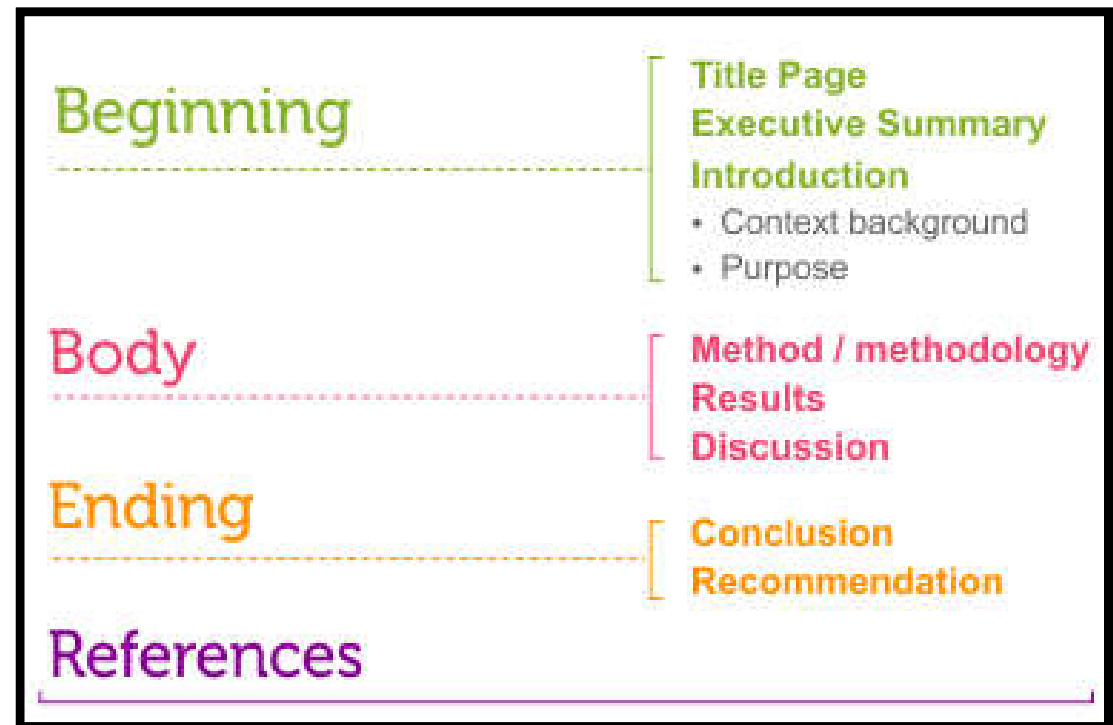


- Features of good report writing:
 - It has a clear thoughts
 - It is complete & self-explanatory
 - It is comprehensive but compact
 - It is accurate in all aspects
 - It has suitable format for readers
- Clarity – Precise – Accuracy – Simplicity – Meaningful



3. Structuring your report

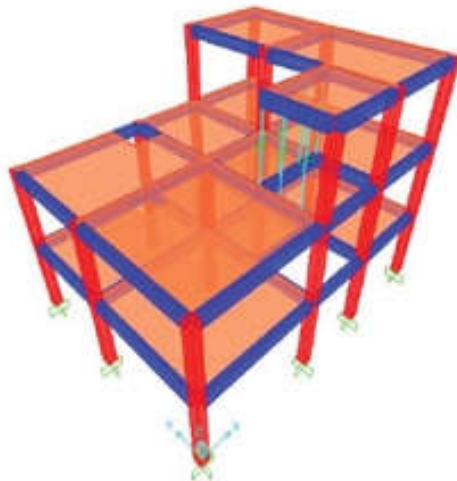
- Report structure:
 - Chapters
 - Sections
 - Sub-sections
- Layout:
 - Numbering
 - Figures & tables
 - Headings & styles



An example of report title page & report structure

STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS AND DESIGN REPORT

FOR
Residential Building
of
NIR KUMARI RAI



PREPARED BY: Enginagar Construction Pvt. Ltd.

July 14, 2017

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3. Structuring your report



- Typical research report structure:
 - Title page
 - [Contents] (*counted but not listed*)
 - Abstract/Executive Summary
 - 1. Introduction
 - 2. Literature Review
 - 3. Methodology/Research Methods
 - 4. Results/Findings
 - 5. Discussions & Recommendations
 - 6. Conclusions
 - References
 - Appendices





3. Structuring your report

- Front matters: (In Roman page numbers, i, ii, iii)
 - Abstract/Executive Summary
 - Acknowledgements
 - Declaration (a signed statement of originality)
 - List of figures
 - List of tables
 - List of abbreviations
- End matters:
 - References
 - Appendices





3. Structuring your report

- **Design report:**
 - May contain much details with technical drawings, calculations & technical information
 - Better to put them in appendices and provide good listing, numbering & indexing
 - The exact report structure will depend on the particular nature of your project
 - For example, one Chapter for each major BSE systems
 - Organised in a systematic & logical way

4. Writing your report



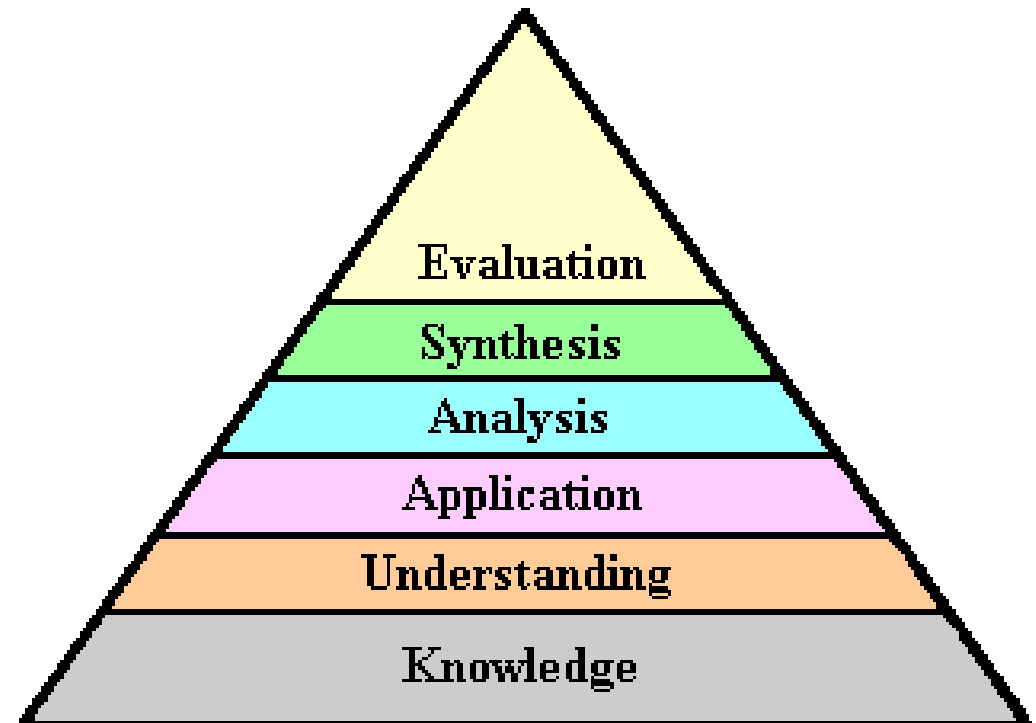
- Good writing style:
 - How to communicate your knowledge
 - Write to express, not to impress
 - Use short sentences, avoid over-complexity
- **Design report:**
 - Graphical & technical design information are most important (e.g. drawings & calculations)
 - Should consider the effect when read on the pages (e.g. drawing scale, resolution, texts, details)





4. Writing your report

- Writing academically:
 - Be objective
 - Be accurate
 - Be direct
 - Be critical
 - Be appropriate
- Writing critically:
 - The student who gives only the facts, with no assessment or interpretation, gets poor marks



Academic style for writing

NO Idiomatic / colloquial (slang)

Kids / boss / gonna / stuff

NO Phrasal verbs

Go up / look up

NO Personal Pronouns

I, we, In my opinion (limit use)

NO Contractions

It'll = it will / It's = it is

NO Questions

So why did the project fail?

NO Personal adverbs

Surprisingly / fortunately

NO number / bullet points

NO vague language

And so on.. / etc...

NO Repetition

Constant repeating same words

Academic Style

No basic language

~~Like~~ – for example

~~Thing~~ – factor

~~Lots of~~ – significant amount

~~Little / big~~ – large

~~Get~~ – obtain

~~Hard~~ – difficult

~~Good / bad~~ – positive / negative

~~Amazing / wonderful~~ – important

YES Passive structures

We analysed the data /

The data was analysed

YES – Academic Vocabulary

See A.W.L

YES – Referencing systems

YES Complex Grammar structures

Nominalisation / noun structures

YES Caution / hedging – tentative language

Possibly / seems / appears / could / may

YES Accurate vocabulary

Difference between law / rule

YES Precise facts / figures

A few years ago / in 2014

4. Writing your report



- Suggested order for writing:
 - Methodology & data/results
 - Introduction & literature survey
 - Discussion
 - Conclusions & recommendations
 - Abstract/Executive summary





4. Writing your report

- Finishing touches:
 - Referencing (avoid plagiarism)
 - Proof reading (e.g. punctuation, grammar, citations)
 - Title pages, contents, list of figures/tables
- Further guidance:
 - How to Write Your Thesis
https://www.ldeo.columbia.edu/~martins/sen_sem/thesis_org.html



5. Practical exercise

- Create a basic outline of your FYP2 ARP **Research Report** (table of contents)
- Exchange with another student & comment on the report structure
- Find out what issue(s) you need to improve on the report outline
- Send the report outline to your supervisor for comments & advice



5. Practical exercise

- Consider the contents & structure of the **Final Design Report** of FYP3 Detailed Design
 - May use the previous Design Report as reference
 - Should focus on new or extended information & avoid too much duplication
 - Organise the graphical & technical design information in the appendices
 - Should show team working & coordination results

Think carefully when you plan & write the reports