

AT3 Template

Individual Industry Innovation Report

(35%; 5-6 pages plus unlimited appendices)

Tips and tricks

Hello Innovator and MIG Colleague!

Below, I provide a few hints to help you envision a possible layout and structure for AT3. Great!

I have developed this template to assist you with AT3 from a style, formatting and layout perspective. However please refer to the AT3 rubric and guidelines in the first instance. Please use this template as a support only.

Feel free to use the tips and the layout features below, if desired. Of course, if you wish, you are welcome to come up with your own navigable layout.

I hope these tips and tricks are handy for envisioning the professional look and feel of your report. My aim is to help you work on developing your own precise and concise professional writing style and a layout that is highly navigable and quick to grasp for a busy professional audience.

Wonderful! You can do it.

Susie

Handy Style Hints:

Please check the [‘Required writing and formatting style section’](#) for full details.

The most important thing is to focus on reaching your general professional readership. Thinking of your reader first is the mark of a good writer. Focus on the reader's experience and therefore the clarity, readability, accessibility and useability of your report. In other words, take a human-centered approach to your writing and you'll greatly improve your impact.

Short and sharp business writing is a really crucial skill to develop and will be fundamental to your impact at work. This assessment is an opportunity to practise!

Professional reports are typically to the point and designed to be rapidly accessible to a variety of readers, including busy CEOs, senior management, industry leaders, and other decision-makers, as well as the general public in some cases. Therefore, brevity, signposting, plain language, summary diagrams/tables/images, and precise and concise language are critical. You've already practiced this style in your AT2 pitches. Now is your opportunity to practise in a written format.

As per the 'Style' section and rubric, remember that you are writing for a diverse and busy professional lay audience and not for academics or markers who are familiar with the task. Make your main points obvious, easy to grasp, and relevant to the broad readership. A professional report should be more accessible than traditional academic writing. Our aim is to influence decision-making and implementation! Academic writing, such as research-oriented essays or technical reports, typically includes lots of detail and dense discipline-specific technical jargon. In some disciplines, there is a focus on using a large volume of words. This is not very readable for the public. As a result, the academic writing style isn't used widely in industry. Try to write in a clear, concise and direct manner so busy readers can grasp your points quickly, using a layout that is highly navigable.

Explain the scope, aims and purpose of the report at the very beginning of your report to make your purpose crystal clear. Clarity and focus is key! Include the 'why' to hook in and focus the reader. After this, continue signposting in each section. At the top of each new section (under each subheading), ensure you signpost what the section will contain and why in a few concise sentences. This will greatly enhance the readability and navigability of your report and create flow.

Draw the busy reader's eye to your take-home points. Use bullets, bold, boxes, white space or other formatting features to draw attention to your major 'take-home' points on each page. Summary diagrams, images, tables and infographics are also engaging and can say a 1000 words in a small amount of space, helping you with the overall page limit. All of this will ensure even skim readers walk away with your most important points. Since your aim is impact, this is what you want.

Use compelling insights, data and research to add weight and credibility to your key arguments and to allow interested readers to follow up on points of interest. Use

relevant and reputable citations to journal articles but also grey literature (e.g. policy documents, technical reports, government announcements, consulting and industry reports, websites, etc.).

Please note that the report has a 6 page limit rather than a word limit. This may be quite different from what you've experienced before. Why do we have a page limit? In the professional world, you'll frequently be asked for a '2 -pager' or a five page synthesis document. You will rarely be asked for a certain word count. This is because the message can also be conveyed in diagrams and figures, and not just in text. Also, people's writing styles are different. Some may be able to convey all the key points in 250 words whereas others will take 600. Thus, this task has a page limit, to get you into a good habit. The 6 page limit excludes the reference list and appendices as well as a title page, table of contents, list of acronyms or glossary.

You can include appendices. When including support information in the appendices as supplementary reference material, make sure you still mention the key points in the main report and direct the reader to the appendices for more details. E.g. The stakeholders are diverse including X, Y and Z. See Appendix 1 for more information on stakeholders who may be affected by the solution. Try not to hide your main point in the appendices and assume the reader will find it. The appendices are for further detail - should the reader want it. Don't rely on the reader reading the appendices; make sure the main points are still briefly summarised in the body of the main report.

Overall, your main challenge is to use precise yet concise direct language and professional, engaging and navigable formatting and layout features to get your point across to busy readers with impact.

This style of writing is a big challenge but you've got this! Developing your skills will absolutely help you in your career. Seize the opportunity to practise this style. Think of your reader's experience first, and you'll be right on track. [See the 'Required writing and formatting style' in Moodle for full details.](#)

Special Note: Each of us will have a different learning trajectory as we approach this task. This is because we are each used to different writing styles, based upon our own disciplinary background and experience. For example, for some of us from STEMM, the learning will come in writing in a more accessible way for a non-research audience. This may involve introducing more plain language, persuasive/compelling language or thoughtful design and layout features. The data, brevity and citations may be easier for us. For some of us from HASS, we may be used to a more formal critical essay format. The challenge will be brevity, focus and plain language. There will be less conceptual theory and framing. However, building an argument, narrative and flow will be easier for you. For others, perhaps those in marketing, communication or design, the challenge will be introducing some extra citations or insights to give further weight to points. The design and layout will be easier! We'll all be on different learning journeys - and that's awesome. :)

Title page

Start with a title page. This is not strictly necessary but will allow you to set a professional tone quickly. A title page also signals the scope of your report and catches your reader's attention, drawing them in.

Try to use the official title of the assessment as your base (see below) but add more detail to make the title even more informative to a lay reader. In other words, add detail to the second line below so that your reader immediately knows what the report is about. I also suggest that you use logos and or images to engage the reader and visually signal what the report is about.

E.g. MIG Industry Innovation Report

<Add a sub-line with your industry partner and topic>

<Insert logos and images that visually signal what your report is about>

Handy hint: As outlined in the rubric and above, we are not writing this report for the markers. We are writing this for a general professional public and decision makers from your organisation. This is how the feedback team will assess your report. This means your title page should not be written for the marker, with details that do not mean anything to those outside the unit i.e. BEX2750 or AT3. Furthermore, you do not need to include your student ID. Your title page should look and feel appropriate for dissemination to a professional audience beyond the university. Terrific!

As per the rubric, the title page does not contribute to the page limit.

Table of contents and/or a glossary of terms or acronyms

This is not strictly necessary but these features, where useful for your particular challenge, may make your report more navigable and accessible. Remember, your aim is to get your messages across to busy decision makers and create impact in industry by providing a compelling and persuasive case. Make your report as easy to absorb, grasp and navigate as possible. Use layout features, like a table of contents and/or glossary, to your advantage.

As per the rubric, these features do not contribute to the page limit.

1 Introduction OR Aims and Scope (approx. 1/4 to a 1/2 of a page with brevity) *Adapt subheading here and throughout if you wish to make your headings as informative and accurate as possible

Tips and tricks

In a nutshell - 'Hey, professionals and industry decision makers, let me give you an introduction to what this report contains and why, so you know what to expect.'

Add a sophisticated, clear and concise overview of the scope and aims of the report.

This section is your opportunity to practise clarifying your overall direction so your general professional audience knows what to expect in the report. This will help them focus. Explain **what the report will contain, and why**. This will make the report more navigable. Your challenge is to do this precisely and concisely.

E.g. This report aims to provide an overview of a prototype solution developed for an industry challenge set by <insert partner details>. The challenge was X. The prototype solution was developed by an interdisciplinary student team in the Monash Innovation Guarantee (MIG). Their expertise is outlined in the report. For transparency and rigour, the report also features a summary of the innovation methods and approaches used to create the solution. It provides details of the challenge analysis, sketching, prototyping and insight and testing performed to introduce the conceptual framework and evidence base underpinning our approach. The report concludes with our recommendations to the industry partner regarding next steps that should be considered to further develop or implement the prototype.

2 Challenge Team (approx. 1/2 a page with brevity)

Tips and tricks

In a nutshell - 'Hey, professionals and industry decision makers, let me build credibility by highlighting the expertise within our team.'

Add a sophisticated and compelling introduction to the team, using a clear or creative format with images.

Use an infographic or images from your AT1A and AT2B talk to convey your team's multifaceted expertise, roles and value in a snappy, engaging, sophisticated and impactful way that allows you to make a personal connection with the reader.

Within this section, use a creative format with images to succinctly introduce the challenge team members, in terms of their roles within the project and the particular strengths, expertise, values and perspectives they brought to the project. You can use your notes from the team collaboration agreement and your AT2 pitch decks to help you. You can use the appendices to add the images if you wish, using a short summary in the report itself.

Overall, your challenge is to synthesise and crystallise this information so it is fast and easy to grasp. You should also aim for a format that is creative, engaging and impactful.

For readability, flow and navigability, include a few lines of signposting at the start of this section so the reader knows what to take away. E.g. This section provides details of the roles, expertise and perspectives of the six team members. (Note: All images/diagrams/tables you include in the report need some explanation like this example sentence. Without this, the reader won't know what you want them to focus upon or take away.)

3 Innovation Methods and Approaches (approx. half to 1 page with brevity)

Tips and tricks

In a nutshell - 'Hey, professionals and industry decision makers, let me show you the rigour of my approach by outlining and defining the methods and tools I applied to create the prototype.'

Add sophisticated and concise definitions of the key tools and processes applied to identify a solution during the sprint, and why they were useful within this project e.g. innovation design sprint, diagramming/mapping, sketching, prototyping and testing/validation.

This is your opportunity to practise communicating your nuanced methodological knowledge in a way that is accessible to a general audience who are not familiar with your approaches. How do you explain your methods/tools so lay readers understand what they are, and why they are relevant to your project?

- In this section, signal the rigour and value of your methods to those who may not have your knowledge and understanding. Define the key tools applied and their relevance to your project.
 - Part of this assignment is about effective communication of technical, niche or academic information to reach and influence a diverse audience,

and plain language definitions can really help bring a general audience up to speed with an unfamiliar topic.

- Give a **rationale for why you used each tool or method** i.e. explain why it is relevant. For example, “Sketching, defined as X (citation), was used to ideate in an uncensored way, **allowing us to...**”.
- Each explanation/definition should be supported by at least one reputable and relevant citation. Your references can be from the grey or peer-reviewed literature and may be drawn from our pre-work and classes if you wish.
- Try to avoid simply listing all your definitions on this page as that is not very useful or engaging. Aim to create flow and navigability, through your layout and signposting.
- In terms of the layout, consider how you’ll make this section easy to read. For example, **consider putting the title of each method in bold, or use two to three numbered subheadings**, or use boxes or dots points or other formatting tricks to break up the information. This will allow busy readers to skip to the information of greatest interest and relevance to them, enhancing useability.
 - If going for gold, you should include definitions and explanations of any additional tools or methods important to your particular challenge beyond the general innovation tools and methods outlined above e.g. software
 - Consider a diagram, boxes or figures. These can convey complex information in a very easy and fast to absorb manner. You can adopt some of these from our readings or workshops, as long as you include an informative caption and a credit/attribution to the authors (a citation).
- As ever, remember to signpost. You should start this page with a few lines to signal what this page contains. This helps the reader know what to focus upon and boosts the overall readability and navigability of the report. E.g. In this section, I transparently outline the widely-accepted professional innovation methods and approaches used to develop the prototype. Our process generally follows the reputable Google Ventures sprint process (citation).
 - As you may have heard before - Tell them what you’ll tell them, tell them, (and remind them what you told them in the conclusion at the end of the report).

Handy Hint:

In this section, and the whole report, your challenge is to provide depth with brevity by using precise and concise language and layout features. Concise and impactful business writing is extremely challenging but this skill will really help you have greater impact in the world of work. In industry, no one has time to hunt through the text for your key take-aways. That’s why this style of writing is so prized. This is your opportunity to practise. Great!

Did you know? It's actually much harder to write a concise and focused synthesis than it is to write a large volume of words. Writing with elegant clarity, depth, focus, synthesis, and crystallisation is much harder than writing with tangents and waffle. *Guess which is easier to read?*

- To write clearly and concisely, you'll need to get very clear on your key messages in your own mind first.
- For this reason, consider building a structure or frame for your report as the first step in your writing process. Add headings with bullet points underneath to remind you of the main points you want to get across.
- After you have your structure, then start writing full sentences and paragraphs.
- During editing, you'll need to remove unnecessary words and make sure you've cut to the crux of your messages. Direct language is clearest when it comes to the professional world. Avoid unnecessary words in sentences like - *In relation to the consideration of...* Avoid tangents and repetition.
- You'll need to consider formatting and layout for the purposes of navigability and readability e.g. tables, diagrams, boxes, bold, diagrams, headings, bullets, signposts etc.
- Emphasise key take-homes with well-selected bullets, bold, headings, white space, or other layout features where needed (applies to all pages). Such formatting draws the eye to your key points and engages the busy professional skim reader (if not overused). Remember, we are trying to reach busy decision makers and professionals and not academics with lots of time for reading. Don't hide your key points.

Avoid crowded pages. Resist the temptation to use small fonts and borders to cram in the words to meet the page limit. If you do this, the pages could feel a bit crowded. The reader's eye tends to skim over big blocks of text, taking less in. A very crowded page will have reduced clarity, readability and impact.

4 Challenge Analysis (approx. 1 page with brevity)

Tips and tricks

In a nutshell - 'Hey, professionals and decision makers, let me explain our understanding of the challenge and its context to you to show you that we really got it - and that we have considered the complex systems and stakeholders involved.'

This is your opportunity to practise summarising your understanding of the challenge in an easy to read way, whilst demonstrating a nuanced understanding of the systems and stakeholders involved.

- Remember to first **signpost what the section will contain and why to boost navigability and flow.**
- Consider **using subheadings**, diagrams, tables, boxes, **bullets**, or other layout features **to break up the page and make it more navigable and readable.**
- Provide a short introduction to the industry partner and their mission, showing how this links to your challenge. How does your challenge relate to the broader goals of the organisation? Very briefly introduce a few details of the organisation for context including its key **stakeholders, location and services.**
- Provide an insightful and sophisticated summary/description of the challenge and challenge map, referring the reader to the challenge map for further details (either in the main report or in the appendices, noting the latter may be easier given space constraints).
- **Tell the reader what they should take away from the challenge map in the body of the text of the main report.**
- Remember to justify why this challenge is so important to create social, economic and or environmental good. Don't assume the reader already knows. Make your writing persuasive and influential as well as user-friendly.
- Include a sophisticated articulation of the problem diagram/map (either in the main report or appendices), which provides an insightful and comprehensive map of the various stakeholders and systems that need to be considered within the challenge, demonstrating consideration of interdisciplinary perspectives, sustainability, empathy and human-centric design.
 - You can include the team's challenge map as it stands or tweak it as suits you.
 - Remember to justify your choices (provide rationales) and signal in the text what the reader should take away from the challenge map diagram. Don't just leave the map hanging out there, with no explanation or rationale. :)
- Provide a strong clarification of, and rationale for, the focus you and your team chose within the broader challenge. You can refer to your sketches if you wish. If you wish to do this, **summarise the sketches in the text of the main report and refer the reader to the appendices for the full details of the sketches.** E.g. Your sentence summarising the three sketches (see Appendix X for the full details of the three sketches considered.)
- Try to create flow through this section; it is not compelling to just list information and have the reader try to understand how the points are linked. Reorder the information and subsections to create flow and a sense of clarity.
- If you are aiming for a strong grade, try to include short definitions of any key words central to your challenge that you think a lay reader may not understand.

E.g. For the purposes of this report, we define regenerative consumption as X (citation).

- Using compelling visuals and phrasing.
- Support the challenge analysis section with at least six relevant and reputable citations.

5 Prototype (approx. 1 page with brevity)

Tips and tricks

In a nutshell - 'Hey, professionals and decision makers, let me provide a compelling description of the prototype solution, demonstrating our consideration of different users and industry constraints/content/stakeholders within our thinking, planning and delivery.'

Okay, now we come to your solution. Nice! This is your opportunity to show off the deep thinking and consideration you showed to the industry context. Highlight the innovative and compelling parts of your solution and the benefits.

- **Singpost what this section contains and why.**
- Please summarise the solution as a whole giving rationales for your choices. Aim to showcase the sophisticated thinking, planning and delivery by the team, with consideration of users and the challenge analysis.
- Present a compelling and creative prototype of the solution in the chosen format. Typically you'll refer the reader to the prototype diagram in the appendices; in the main report, you'll tell the reader what they should focus on (describe key points).
- In your explanation, highlight what is innovative and a point of differentiation for your solution. Is it faster than what has been done before? Is it the most viable and financially attractive solution? How does it beat the competitors or status quo?
- Give the wow factor by describing the economic, social and or environmental benefits of your solution. Draw out the value it will provide to the organisation and users.
- Use at least three relevant and reputable citations.
- Consider subheadings, boxes, infographics, tables, diagrams or other layout features.
- If there is really detailed information you want to provide the reader with access to, to validate components of your solution, but this is not absolutely core to your short main report (which is designed to be a concise and thus readable summary), give a few lines of summary for this information and refer the reader to the appendices for the full details. E.g. The key stakeholders are X, Y and Z (see Appendix 2 for specific details). This way you avoid distracting your reader from your core messages. Remember, professionals are short on time and likely

to skim read. If they wish to dive deeper, they have the option to go to the reference material in the appendices.

6 Insight and Testing (approx 3/4 to 1 page with brevity)

Tips and tricks

In a nutshell - 'Hey, professionals and decision makers, let me give you a summary of the main themes from my research (grey and peer reviewed), customer testing and industry partners. Let me explain how this allowed me to build a better solution, with rigour.'

- **Signpost what this section contains and why.**
- Add a sophisticated synthesis of data and insight gained from at least five customers/users/experts*, the industry partners, and reputable grey and peer-reviewed literature, describing how this influenced the final solution (*fewer than five is fine for certain projects).
- **Don't include every detail** - draw out the dominant themes (use synthesis). Sort the findings into themes and give an overview of the findings from those themes. Do not give every detail from every reading and person you spoke to. If you wish, **you can provide more detail in the appendices** (the text in the main report is a summary).
- Include information on why certain people and literature were used, chosen and relevant. In other words, include rationales to show the rigour behind your choices.
- Use layout features to convey the information in an easy to grasp way. As always, if using diagrams, tables, images or infographics, tell the reader what to take away from these in the body of the text.
- In a compelling manner, **articulate how you used testing to influence the prototype.**
- If it makes sense for you and the flow of your report, this section can come before the prototype section. You can shuffle the order of sections to create flow, as suits you.
- Use **at least five relevant and reputable citations.**
- If going for a strong mark, it might be nice to **acknowledge the limitations of your testing.**

E.g. We completed preliminary exploratory customer testing with users including X, Y and Z in order to achieve A and B. These five individuals were chosen for reason Y. The demographics of customers included in testing can be found in Appendix X (Table 1). Based upon the customer testing, we identified four key themes (see Figure 1 below). < Summarise the main themes in the text. E.g. While all customers gave positive

feedback regarding X and Y, there was limited uptake of A and B amongst 80% of respondents.> This suggests X and Y. Whilst further testing is required, these preliminary insights provide some early understanding of the viability of the solution, particularly since the findings were also triangulated by interviews with the industry partner and research into the grey and primary literature. <Describe any triangulation.> This influenced the development of the prototype in the following ways: X, Y. We acknowledge the testing is not comprehensive but preliminary in nature. For example, we recognise the experts/customers who undertook the testing were biased towards....Further testing should be conducted that focuses on X and Y.

7 Recommendations and Conclusion (approx. 1/2 to 1 page with brevity)

Tips and tricks

In a nutshell - 'Hey, professionals and decision makers, here are the key things you should do to continue to develop the prototype or implement it. These are our recommended next steps. And - let us sum up the main findings from each section so our key messages are reinforced in your mind.'

You could use a **separate heading for the recommendations and conclusion** if you wish. Do this if it will increase flow for your own report.

Provide **at least two insightful, practical and feasible recommendations to the industry partner on what they should do next based upon their report.** E.g. Expert workshop within the organisation to discuss the findings, further testing with specific groups, further development of the prototype, research into funding models, competitor research, development of partnerships with related organisations that can provide resourcing or support, etc. **Try to make the recommendations SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely/Time-Bound).**

Next, bring it home to conclude! Reinforce key points so they stick in a busy persons' mind. This is all about impact. Summarise your main points from each section in one short paragraph or series of bullets to help a busy reader quickly get across the most important information covered in the entire report. This summarisation will help your key points take hold in your reader's memory and ensure they leave with your core 'takeaways'. In the world of work, some professional readers will only read your conclusion so it is a very important part of your report.

The easiest approach to writing your conclusion is to include 1-2 sentences to sum up each different section of your report. You could, for example, start with a line or bullet point on what the report aimed to do. Then add a line or bullet on the value and expertise of your team, a line on the methods and approaches you used, a line

summarising the nature of your challenge, a line summarising the nature of your solution, and a line outlining what your testing showed you. End with a line that summarises your key recommendations.

It is tough to write *this* concisely – but this is a hugely important skill for getting your ideas read and taken on board, particularly at work! You can do it.

Handy hint: Think holistically

This template was developed to help guide your professional writing for a diverse audience.

The aim is to give you a flavour of a potential format for your report, show the style of a professional report, and ultimately save you time in development and assist your learning.

It is great to use this template and we hope it helps you.

However, if you are going for gold, you cannot simply ‘chuck in’ each required item listed in the template and rubric.

You will need to step back from each section, and the overall paper, to create some flow and narrative across each page. This may require shuffling sections, using diagrams, tables or other layout features for impact, and creating signposts and linking statements to enhance the logical flow of ideas.

Creating flow is useful because this enhances the reader’s experiences and makes the report more navigable and readable for the user. You want to provide the reader with an easy to follow train of thought throughout the report. You can change the order of sections if it makes sense for the flow of the whole report.

When you think of the reader when trying to structure your writing (i.e. when your goal is to communicate with the reader), you actually increase the probability that the reader will be able to understand, absorb, retain and apply your valuable content.

In other words, take a human-centered approach to your writing and you’ll greatly improve your impact.

I hope this template was handy for your professional development. You’ve got this!

References

Tips and tricks

- Use any referencing style you wish but you must use it consistently across the whole report for professionalism.
- Quality referencing will enhance the weight and credibility of your work. It provides rigour, attribution to authors and allows readers to follow up on points of interest.
- Ensure capitalisation is uniform/consistent throughout the list, particularly with titles.
- It is okay to repeat in-text citations in this style of report.
- Grey literature is more than fine to use e.g. government, corporate and consultancy reports (you will find this during your career too). Aim for a few journal articles too however.
- The reference list comes before the appendices.

The reference list does not contribute to the page limit.

Appendices (no page limit)

Tips and tricks

- This is where you may wish to house technical and/or highly detailed information that a busy reader might not find crucial.
- Appendices are always supplementary to the main report.
- This is reference material to back up your points in the main text.
- Put items here that may possibly distract the reader from the crux of your argument, but you would like them to be able to refer to, if they are interested.
- The appendices section is unlimited, so feel free to use this if the overall page limit is constraining you.
- The appendices do not count towards the page limit.
- Number the items in the appendices i.e. Appendix 1, 2, 3 etc.
- Each item needs a detailed caption e.g. Appendix 1 Table 1: Description of fluid mechanics of X and Y using Brown et al. (2022) focusing on A and B. The main finding is Z.
- The reader should be able to interpret any item/figure/table using the caption without having read the full report.
- Here and throughout the whole report, captions go above tables and below figures/diagrams.

The appendices do not contribute to the page limit.

Style

[Check the AT3 'Required writing and formation style' section for full details](#)

6 Page Limit

- The reference list does not contribute to the limit
- The title page does not contribute to the limit
- Any glossary, table of contents (ToC) or list of acronyms you choose to include in this report will not contribute to the limit
- If using a glossary, put it at the front of the report before or after the ToC, and include citations e.g. Oxford dictionary, Harvard Business Review
- The appendices (supporting information/reference material) does not contribute to the limit (but the main points from the appendices should still be included in the main report)



Well done for attempting this task! We hope you find it valuable for your professional development. You've absolutely got this!