Swinburne University of Technology, Lilydale

A Presentation Style Guide for Business Students

Mark A. Tucker
Trevor H. Tonkin

Updated August 2005

SWINBURNE

SWINBURNE UNIVERSITY
OF TECHNOLOGY
LILYDALE

CRICOS provider code: 00111D

Version 3

Published by: Swinburne University of Technology, Lilydale
Locked Bag 218
Lilydale VIC 3140

Any questions regarding this publication should be directed to the authors, Mark Tucker (mtucker@swin.edu.au) or Trevor Tonkin (ttonkin@swin.edu.au).

Table of Contents

Introduction

Writing is easy. All you have to do is cross out the wrong words.

Mark Twain

This Presentation Style Guide came about because we were both concerned about the ability of business students to write clearly, reference correctly, and undertake research. Based on many years of teaching experience we have attempted to identify and explain the most common problems you will encounter in preparing assignments and undertaking research.

This guide can be divided into two broad sections. The first section relates to common assessment tasks and covers reference citation, writing an essay, writing a report, oral presentations and exam techniques. The second section relates to students undertaking independent research or writing an honours thesis. This section concentrates on identifying and explaining the issues involved in successfully undertaking research and writing a research report or thesis. Much of this section is based on work undertaken by Marianne Hutcheson from the Centre for eBusiness and Communication at Lilydale.

Our intention is to provide a basic guide that will improve your written, communication and research skills. This guide is not a substitute for any specific discipline preferred-style approach. You should refer to this guide when preparing your assignments and undertaking research. We hope this guide will provide you with confidence to present your ideas and arguments with clarity and accuracy.

When at university, you may often feel that taking initiative and aiming for excellence is not supported or encouraged by others around you. While this may be the case, what you should focus on is your own personal achievements and personal satisfaction. Remember it is better to make mistakes and learn from them while at university, because in business you may not get another chance. Enjoy developing your written and communication skills.

Mark Tucker
Lecturer in Economics

Trevor Tonkin
Lecturer in Accounting

August, 2004

Studying Business Subjects

Undertaking a business degree will include the study of a variety of subjects from different disciplines. In fact when obtaining a business degree you should aim to gain a broad view of the business environment in order to obtain a well-rounded business education. Areas of study may include accounting, economics, law, eBusiness, management and marketing, all of which contribute to the success or failure of a business. That is why it is important to appreciate the inter-disciplinary links that exist between the subjects you study.

The business environment is constantly changing and evolving and as such students studying a business degree and its component subjects need to develop study techniques that facilitate an understanding not just of the past, but also of current trends and strategies. Experience has shown that the majority of students tend to find a method of studying that suits them best. However, when you are studying a number of different subjects, one method may not be suitable for all subjects.

Subjects that are clearly organised into topics are usually the easiest to study, while many students find subjects where the topic areas are interconnected conceptually difficult. Contrary to popular belief, issues in business are rarely clear-cut. If this was the case, business would never make a loss, companies would not go into liquidation and people would not be able to lose on the sharemarket. As such these issues need to be considered when gaining a business education.

Business relies in so many ways on the emotions, actions and reactions of individuals. While economics might explain why people react in one way in a given situation, accounting may look at what has happened and attempt to analyse its impact on the future. Subsequently, the law may look at the actions of parties and attempt to determine the best way to resolve the problem that has arisen. The interrelationship between business disciplines is constant and an understanding of this relationship should be seen as vital to a business student.

Developing an Interest

The noted physics professor Julius Sumner Miller became famous in Australia in the late 1960's when he hosted a television program on science issues. In his lectures, television program, and then later in television advertisements for a brand of chocolate, his catchcry was the poignant question – "Why is it so?". This and related questions are ones that business students should also ask. For example:

- Why is the theory correct?
- Why has the theory been developed?
- Why is the theory not realistic in practice or in a particular situation?
- What if the factors on which the theory is based change?
- What factors may affect this idea or approach in practice?
- Why does one approach work and another not work?

During your time at university you should acquire a keen interest in the field of business. Develop your interest by reading and questioning issues that arise and are discussed in the business section of major newspapers and magazines such as Business Review Weekly. Don't rely on others – seek out your own knowledge and challenge your own understanding of the commercial environment in which business operates. Begin the journey in your study of business by committing yourself to gaining an appreciation of your particular area of interest. Ask questions; examine the issues raised by a problem and look beyond the quick cliché answers.

Above all – develop a "business way of thinking" that will benefit you in your study and in your future career.

Aims, Objectives and Teaching Methodology

When planning a course and then subjects within the course, lecturers develop aims and objectives in conjunction with a teaching methodology.

Aims are general statements of what is to be learnt over the time studying a particular subject or course. The aims of a subject often explain the place that a subject holds in a course or particular discipline. The aims may also link the subject with other discipline areas or identify its relevance within the broad business environment.

Objectives are more specific and identify the specific skills and abilities that students should learn from a particular subject, module or topic. The objectives will normally be written so that they focus on what the student needs to be able to do. Commonly objectives use words such as describe, explain, discuss and demonstrate to indicate the goal to be achieved. Students are encouraged to use these as a means of reviewing their understanding of subjects and topics.

Methodological aims are statements that refer to the reasons behind a particular teaching methodology. For example, the assessment task of group presentations may be included in the subject to meet the methodological aims of encouraging teamwork, communication and problem solving skills. Methodological aims may include:

- to encourage questioning,
- to encourage critical analysis,
- to encourage the development of practical problem solving skills,
- to encourage the development and display of professional attitudes and knowledge, and
- to encourage “self-learning” techniques by the student.

Written Presentation

All written assessments completed by students should have at the front of the report or essay a title page, and if available, an assignment cover sheet. The title page is not required to be a work of art but it should suit the particular type of assessment. Unless specifically noted in the assessment requirements, generally the title page should indicate:

- the subject code and name,
- the title of the assessment topic,
- your name and ID number,
- your lecturer or tutor's name (spelt correctly),
- your tutorial time (day and hour), and
- the due date of submission.

Your paper should be submitted (bound or stapled) in a clear, manila or other suitable folder. Do not use the type of binder in which individual pages are inserted into plastic pockets – it makes marking (and hence giving feedback) very much harder.

General Format

In general:

- Your paper should be typed or word-processed in 11 or 12 point easy to read font using at least 1.5 line spacing.
- Pages must be numbered and in order.
- Leave a reasonable margin on the right for the marker's comments (at least 3 cms), and adequate binding space on the left.
- Use one side of the page only.
- All tables, charts, figures and diagrams must be numbered, have a title and be sourced where appropriate.
- Quotes and references must be properly referenced or attributed.

Things to Remember

Keep in mind:

- Keep reports impersonal – use the third person style of address – never use “I” or “we”.
- Use short, simple and familiar words and sentences. Avoid cliches, metaphors, “in” words and foreign phrases.
- Do not use abstractions or adjectives that overstate the meaning of results.
- If you want to use initials, spell them out the first time you use them, for example, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC).
- Clearly identify the question or topic you are answering.
- Use correct punctuation including a full stop at the end of all sentences.
- Good proof reading is essential. Always check the spelling and grammar. You should re-read your assignment a couple of days after its completion to check expression before submitting.
- Most computer software packages include a spell checker – make sure you use it.
- Double check that you have met all assignment requirements.
- Where there is more than one way to spell a word the writer should aim at consistency, for example in the use of “s” or “z” (organise, organize). Australian spelling is preferred.
- Always keep a copy of your submitted work.
- If any points are unclear, immediately contact your lecturer or tutor for clarification. Do not guess.
- It is advisable to get someone else to read your assignment through to check for spelling, grammar and clarity.

Understanding the Question

As a business student your assessment will be largely based on written work whether it be an essay, a business report, or case study. One of the hardest, yet most important aspects in answering a question is to clearly understand what is being asked. Obviously you should consult a dictionary – every subject discipline has a special dictionary of technical terms – in order to understand the meaning of key terms. Understanding the terms used in a question provides you with the foundation to successfully compete an assignment. Listed below are some commonly encountered words and their meanings adapted from Anderson and Poole (1998, p.9-10).

Analyse: consider the various components of the whole and try to describe the inter-relationships between them.

Compare: examine the characteristics of the objects in the question to demonstrate their similarities and their differences.

Contrast: examine the characteristics of the objects in question to demonstrate differences.

Define: give a definition or state terms of reference.

Describe: give an account of.

Discuss: present the different aspects of a question or problem.

Enumerate: give a listing.

Evaluate: examine the various sides of a question and try to reach a judgment.

Examine critically: act as a judge or critic, appraise.

Illustrate: give an example, explain, draw a figure.

Interpret: translate, solve or comment on the issue.

Justify: show that the arguments raised or conclusions made are reasonable.

Prove: demonstrate or show by logical argument.

Review: examine the question critically, analysing the justification or statements made.

Summarise: state the main points briefly.

Common Abbreviations

Common abbreviations you may meet (in a bibliography, appendix, reference or as a note) include:

anon.	anonymous, the author of a work is not known
Art.	article
c.	circa, about a certain date, for example c.1920
cf	compare with
ch.	chapter
ed. or eds.	editor or editors
edn or edns	edition or editions
eg.	for example
et al	and others
etc.	and so forth
Fig(s)	figure(s)
ibid.	in the same place, similar footnote but different page
idem. or id.	same reference and page number as previous footnote
ie.	that is
loc. cit.	in the place cited
n.b.	note well
n.d.	no date given for a publication
n.p.	no place given for a publication
op. cit.	in the work cited
p. or pp.	page or pages
passim	here and there
rev.	revised
[sic]	identifies that an error (spelling, grammar) is in the original. Placed immediately after the word or phrase in question.
trans.	translated or translator
viz	namely
vol. or vols.	volume or volumes

Reference Citation

All pieces of assessment must contain correct reference citation. The Harvard method of citation has become increasingly popular due to its ease of use and easy readability. However, some lecturers prefer the traditional Oxford footnoting method so you should always confirm the preferred method with your lecturer. This guide includes details of the Harvard method of citation. More detailed information regarding the Harvard method is available on the Swinburne Library web site in the publication titled 'Harvard system: in-text references, reference lists and bibliographies'.

There are many different definitions and views on plagiarism. Essentially, plagiarism is the presentation of the work of others as if it were your own. This includes using other peoples ideas, words or diagrams/figures without fully acknowledging the original source. Swinburne's definition of plagiarism is shown in the box below.

Plagiarism is the action or practice of taking and submitting or presenting the thoughts, writings or other work of someone else as though it is your own work. Plagiarism includes any of the following, without full and appropriate acknowledgment to the original source(s):

(a) the use of the whole or part of a computer program written by another person;

(b) the use, in essays or other assessable work, of the whole or part of a written work from any source including but not limited to a book, journal, newspaper article, set of lecture notes, current or past student's work, any other person's work, a website or database;

(c) the paraphrasing of another's work;

(d) the use of musical composition, audio, visual, graphic and photographic models,

(e) the use of realia, that is objects, artefacts, costumes, models and the like.

Plagiarism also includes the preparation or production and submission or presentation of assignments or other work in conjunction with another person or other people when that work should be your own independent work. This remains plagiarism whether or not it is with the knowledge or consent of the other person or people. It should be noted that Swinburne encourages its students to talk to staff, fellow students and other people who may be able to contribute to a student's academic work but that where independent assignment is required, submitted or presented work must be the student's own.

Enabling plagiarism contributes to plagiarism and therefore will be treated as a form of plagiarism by the University. Enabling plagiarism means allowing or otherwise assisting another student to copy or otherwise plagiarise work by, for example, allowing access to a draft or completed assignment or other work.

Plagiarism in any form is not acceptable and you should remember that failure to cite references or to use correct citation methods may attract academic penalties which could range from failing the assessment to exclusion from a course or the university. A booklet titled ‘Avoiding plagiarism and cheating’ is available from the Swinburne Library web site. However, in general to avoid plagiarism you should:

- plan your paper and its contents;
- ensure you indicate any quotes used;
- acknowledge sources of tables, charts and graphs; and
- identify ideas that other authors have published as their own.

Harvard Method

The Harvard method is often described as the ‘author-date’ method as the focus in the body of the paper is on the author’s surname, the date of publication and page reference, with the full reference given in the bibliography. At no stage is the full citation included in the text of the document.

Where an idea or general thought is being referred to, then the author’s surname and date of the publication are included in the citation.

> The use of experiential learning in accounting education is fundamentally due to the need for real life experiences in preparation for the realities of a constantly changing business environment, and the need for the development of generic skills to enable dealing with these changes (Tonkin 2000).

In instances where a specific part of the reference is being discussed or being quoted, the page number should also be given.

> Debate regarding the effective use of experiential learning has, broadly speaking, been favourable as “rarely do problems present as neatly as boxed issues with predetermined answers” (Tonkin 2000, p.57).

The Harvard method also allows the writer to include the reference citation within the text of their paper.

> Tonkin (2000) argues that the generic skills required by accountants have not changed since the beginning of double entry bookkeeping.

When an idea has been posed or discussed by several authors the references should be separated by a comma. In the case of referring to multiple works by the same author in the same year, the addition of a lower case letter should be used to distinguish the two references. If there are two authors their surnames should be linked by the word “and”. Where there are more than two authors, the work should be cited by the first author’s surname followed by the term “et al”.

> The importance of international business and the impact of globalisation on management practices is increasingly being debated (Czinkota et al 2002, Hill 2003, Feaver and Mahuood 1997). The need for companies to create a competitive advantage in order to successfully trade internationally is strongly emphasised by Hill (2001a, 2001b).

Quotes

When including quotes (and diagrams or charts) in a written assessment it is important to remember that they should complement the point being made, rather than being the point. Quotes should only be used where the specific words of the author are essential in developing a line of argument or encapsulating a number of ideas already discussed.

If the quotation is one sentence or shorter in length it should be incorporated into your writing and denoted by the use of quotation marks. Longer quotes should be in a separate paragraph to distinguish them from your text. The paragraph should be indented and typed in italics, however quotation marks are not necessary.

Quotes should be typed in the exact way as the original work, including any mistakes or grammatical or punctuation errors. If you wish to add anything to the quote as a means of explanation square brackets should be used to encase the words that differ from the original. Should sections of the work being quoted not be relevant they can be omitted and replaced by three fullstops (…).

Bibliography

At the back of any academic paper or assignment should be a list of the references you have used in preparing and writing your assignment. This should list all references used including those cited in the paper and others used to gain background information. The list should be in alphabetical order by the author’s surname. The format of the reference is important and variations exist depending upon the type of reference being cited. Although not covering all possible situations, below is a list of the most common references that you will encounter. Note that the specific format and use of italics is important.

Books

In the case of a single author:

Surname, Initial(s). Year, *Title*, Edition, Publisher, Place of Publication.

Catharo, G. 1998, *The Australian Sharemarket Explained Simply – A Guide for Investors*, 2nd Ed, Wrightbooks, Elsternwick.

In the case of multiple authors:

Hansen, J.M. and Tucker, M.A. 2001, *Ten Steps to Success – Macroeconomics*, Plato Press, Hawthorn.

Chan, H., Lee, R., Dillon, T. and Chang, E. 2001, *eCommerce – Fundamentals and Applications,* John Wiley & Sons, West Sussex.

Article or Chapter in an Edited Book

In the case of an edited book, the particular article or chapter is cited first, followed by the details of the book.

Surname(s), Initial(s). Year, 'Title of Chapter or Article' in *Title of Publication*, Edition, Editor(s), Publisher, Place of Publication.

Meltzer, A.H. 2000, 'Asian Problems and the IMF', in *International Economics and International Economic Policy – A Reader*, 3rd Ed, ed Philip King, Irwin McGraw-Hill, Boston.

Tonkin, T. 2004, 'Earnings Management: professional problem and failure' in *Readings in Auditing*, ed Rod Johnson, John Wiley & Sons, Milton.

Articles in a Journal

Surname(s), Initial(s). Year, 'Title of Article',*Title of Journal*, Volume and/or Issue Number, Page Numbers.

Lee, T. 1997, 'The Very Peculiar Practice of Auditing', *International Journal of Auditing*, vol.1, no.3, pp.163-164.

Leung, P. and Cooper, B. J. 1995, 'Ethical Dilemmas in Accounting Practice', *Australian Accountant*, vol.65, no.4, May, pp.28-30.

If there is no author:

Title of Journal, Year, 'Title of Article', Date, Page Numbers.

The Economist, 2002, 'Big Mac Currencies', April 27, p.80.

Articles in a Newspaper

Surname(s), Initial(s). Year, 'Title of Article', *Title of Newspaper*, Day and Month, Page Numbers.

Bartholomeusz, S. 2002, 'Howling for auditors' blood is no more than baying at the moon', *The Age*, 12 February, Business Age p.3.

Articles in Conference Proceedings

Surname(s), Initial(s). Year, 'Title of Paper', *Title of Proceedings*, Conference Body, Place, Page Numbers.

Tonkin, T. 2000, 'Closing the Student Expectation Gap – A Review of the use of 'Role-Play' in Teaching Auditing', *Proceedings of the Accounting Educators Forum*, Accounting Education SIG, Accounting Society of Australia and New Zealand, Sydney, pp.51-57.

Television

Four Corners 2003, 'Money Laundering', ABC Television, 10 February.

Interview or Radio Transcript

Interviewee Surname, Initial. Year, Details – Content, Date

James, I. 2003, Telephone interview – Outlook for Australian Economy, 3 February.

Paterson, H. 2003, Personal interview – Subject Development in Finance, 20 January.

Howard, J. 2003, Radio interview with Jon Faine, ABC Radio – Corporate Governance in Australia, 20 February.

The Internet and Electronic Resources

The increasing use of electronic resources enables access to a vast amount of information, yet this medium requires additional detail to be included in references. Where appropriate, you should include:

- the source of the information, eg CDROM,
- the availability of the article, eg the full Internet URL, and
- the date the information was accessed.

The Internet enables access to large amounts of information. However, it is important that before you use any material available via the Internet that you first consider and judge its validity. Web sites can be created at little cost and it is important to determine the author's credentials before using the resource. A web site in itself is not a reference. You should reference the particular page, document or article that you have used. It is also a good idea to print a copy of the information in case the web site or the resource changes at a future time.

Bouckaert, P. and Zia-Zarifi, S. 2002 ,'For the Sins of the Taliban', *Human Rights Watch*, March 20, http://www.hrw.org/editorials/2002/afghan_0320.htm (Accessed: May 4, 2002)

When you have used an online database to find a particular article or paper, you should note that you have gained access to that resource via a particular database.

Stulz, R.M. 1999, 'What's Wrong with Modern Capital Budgeting?', *Financial Practice and Education*, vol.9, iss.2, pp.7-11. From EBSCOhost (database).

Legal Citation

Correct legal citation is essential. Something as simple as the incorrect use of a bracket can change the meaning of the citation. In general terms the law comes from two sources; the decisions of courts in cases ('case law' or 'common law') and the legislation made by parliament ('statute law').

Citing Case Law

When citing case law, the name of the case should always be in italics. The first time you mention the case you should include it's full citation, for example; *Salomon v Salomon & Co Ltd* [1895] 2 Ch 232. However, subsequent uses of the case need only use the name or if appropriate you can shorten the name of the case. For example, *Salomon v Salomon & Co Ltd* would become *Salomon's* case.

Citing Legislation

When citing legislation, the name of the legislation and the date should always be in italics. It is always helpful to show the jurisdiction of the legislation, however this is not in italics. For example:

Goods Act 1958 (Vic)
Trade Practices Act 1974 (Cwlth)

When making reference to legislation it is important that you cite the specific section or sub-section being discussed. When sections are being referred to at the beginning of a sentence you should use the full word. If it is being used within a sentence you should use the following abbreviations to denote the part of the act to which you are referring.

s.	section
ss.	sections
sub-s.	sub-section
sub-ss.	sub-sections

Writing an Essay

Most essays require you to respond to a question raised and in so doing gives the student the opportunity to express their views or opinions. In responding to the question raised think carefully about what it is asking you to do. If this is not clear, try to write in your own words what you think the essay question means. There are two basic types of essay topics:

- Question based – where a question is posed, which needs to be considered and an answer or solution discussed.
- Statement based – where the essay topic is a statement that needs to be evaluated and the validity of the statement assessed.

There are no "right" answers to essay questions. However an essay question is also not the opportunity to write everything you know (or can find) about a particular topic. An essay should only contain content that is relevant to the topic and contributes to the arguments contained in the essay.

> Many students pose the problem in words such as these: 'I know so little about the subject and those who write the books know so much. In addition, these authors express their ideas much better than I can. How, then, can I be expected to give my answer in my own words when it is all in the books? Much of the time I have to struggle to merely understand what they say, far less give my own ideas.'
>
> Taylor 1989, p.52.

This quote illustrates a common problem with the way students approach writing an essay. An essay is not a reproduction of what already exists – it is the student's original views and opinions on the topic, which may agree or disagree with the views of others. If the views are based on those previously expressed by others or the views have come about through information supplied by others, then referencing should occur. Quotes should only be used to illustrate a point being expressed – they should never be the point.

An essay or research paper takes time to plan and develop. Generally, the process is to:

1. Determine a topic if one is not set.
2. Decide on how the essay should be written – plan your approach.
3. Research and organise the evidence – read widely to gain a broad understanding.

4. Map out the essay by listing points to be made in the order they are to be made (ie. a skeleton of the essay).
5. Write a draft.
6. Revise and edit the draft or drafts.
7. Prepare a final version for submission.

A good essay cannot be written overnight, but instead should be developed over a period of time. Before you can commence writing any part of an essay you must first understand the topic. Ask yourself:

- What is the topic asking?
- What are the factors that impact on this topic?
- Where can I find more information on the fundamental elements of this topic?
- Is there a seminal article or book on this topic?
- What viewpoints are there to this debate?

When planning and writing an essay, remember it is not merely a description of what other people believe. Rather it is an analysis of views or issues raised leading to a conclusion that has been reached on the basis of the research completed. Be critical in your analysis of issues, do not believe everything that one writer says, and watch out for the possibility of bias in other authors.

Elements of an Essay

An essay should have at the beginning; on a separate page, an abstract (sometimes called a synopsis) that is a summary of the main arguments, findings and conclusions. The abstract allows the reader to know the basis for the essay before they read the essay and is normally between 200 and 500 words in length.

The actual essay should begin with an introduction and then move into the main body of the essay. The essay should conclude with a review of the issues and should not add any new material not already discussed. Historically essay authors were discouraged from using headings, however if appropriate, use headings and subheadings to focus your essay. The following should act as a guide.

Abstract (Synopsis)

- Identify the basis for the essay.
- State the line of argument or discussion you will use.
- Outline in general terms the conclusions you have reached.

Introduction

- Introduce the topic/arouse and stimulate the reader's interest.
- State the thesis or line of argument you will be developing.
- Define the key concepts/terms in the essay.
- Clearly outline the format/structure of the essay for the reader.

Body

- Integrate material on the basis of ideas/dates that support the purpose of the essay.
- Need to analyse/interpret material used. Avoid being merely descriptive.
- Use sub-headings to highlight aspects of the body.
- Link studies and show important relationships between them and how they support the intentions you develop.
- Use linking sentences to maintain continuity of ideas. One linking sentence should conclude the paragraph, and the second linking sentence at the beginning of the following paragraph should relate to what preceded it.
- Citations – be consistent in your approach, using the Harvard system.

Conclusion

- Last paragraph(s).
- Restate argument, which is supported by summarising main points that were highlighted in the body.
- Do not introduce new material.

Bibliography

You should check for three things:

- Is the list in alphabetical order?
- Do all the entries conform to the prescribed Harvard Method style?
- Do all the references cited in the text appear in the bibliography?

Writing a Business Report

A business report is designed to communicate information to a particular audience. Remember that you are not writing for yourself, but interpreting text and data on behalf of other people. Writing a report is quite different from writing an essay. It is most important to remember for whom you are writing the report and ensure that it will suit their particular needs. Above all, remember that a report will, in general, have a practical outcome of some type. This is very different from the theoretical outcomes of an essay and the writing style must conform to this objective.

A report generally aims to have certain recommendations adopted. A well written report will almost certainly succeed, whereas a poorly written report will almost certainly fail. If the report does not achieve the desired outcomes, then the work involved doing the research and preparing the report will have been wasted.

Presentation and Layout

The way in which a report is presented is sometimes as important as its message. Presentation is not merely a matter of flashy covers, surplus illustrations and quality printing – it requires clarity and is a means to understanding. Therefore the presentation and layout of the report should be regarded as an essential guide to take the reader through the text and maximise understanding. A report would normally contain the following:

- Title Page.
- Executive Summary.
- Table of Contents.
- Covering Letter (optional).
- Introduction.
- Body of Report (made up of many sections).
- Conclusions.
- Recommendations.
- End notes/Bibliography.
- Appendices.

Title Page

The title page should contain the title of the report, the names and titles of the authors and the date on which the report was completed. The layout should be attractive, but should not distract the reader from determining what the report is about. In large reports that are bound, the title page will often be inside the cover, as with a book.

Executive Summary

The executive summary is designed to be read by people who do not have the time to read the whole report. It is a concise summary of the major points arising from the detail contained in the body of the report, and should be no longer than one to two pages. It should briefly state the problem, the scope of the investigation, the methods used to research the issue, the principle arguments and issues raised, and the major conclusions and recommendations.

The executive summary should be written last. Remember that almost every reader will go to the summary first, before reading the body of the report. Many readers may not read any further than the summary, making up their minds on both the issues and any recommendations on the basis of this alone.

Table of Contents

This should give the contents of all parts of the report, including headings and subheadings. It should also give page numbers of every section and subsection adjacent to their headings. Normally, the headings are in the same typeface and size as in the report and if a numbering system is used, it should coincide with that used in the report.

Introduction

The introduction should be the second last thing written in the report. Like the executive summary, it is important that you know what you have discussed before you introduce it. The introduction presents the background to the issue and makes several important points that may help the reader understand the whole report. In general it will contain:

- the authorisation and the objectives,
- the scope of the report,
- the major sources, and
- any acknowledgments.

Body of the Report

This is where the writer discusses their investigations in full and presents the findings in a clear and systematic format. The body of the report should show a logical development of ideas and should be broken up under headings and sub-headings. The use of dot or numbered points is often useful in making reports easier to understand and read.

Conclusions

Based on the body of the report, you need to draw conclusions as to what the data or information presented means, that is to analyse and interpret the data, and present its implications. It will normally be a few paragraphs summarising your findings.

Recommendations

A business report is commissioned because someone needs to take action. The most critical part of the report is therefore the quality (and quantity) of the recommendations for action that are made as a result of the study. Every business report must therefore contain practical and realistic recommendations, which should always be solidly based on the prior section’s conclusions, which are in turn, solidly based on facts presented in the body of the report.

End Notes

This provides the reader with additional information that may not necessarily be found in the bibliography. A list of people consulted or involved in the project may be included here.

Bibliography

A bibliography is a list of the written sources used when researching the report. It should be presented in alphabetical order by the author’s surname. The bibliography should demonstrate how widely you have researched and in some instances will become a research tool for others inquiring into the same topic area.

Appendices

Any additional information which is relevant but which is a diversion from the main arguments in the body of the report will usually be included in an appendix. Tables of statistics, examples of questionnaires, or explanations of procedures used will be shown in the appendices. Appendices are designated by letters rather than numbers to distinguish them from chapters or the body of the report. Each appendix should be presented as a separate entity.

Case Studies

A case study is a narrative that highlights a real life situation, issue or problem. The aim for the student is to identify the issues and then, after consideration, determine any potential solutions. A review of the issues, process of analysing the problem and the recommendations as to how the issue should be dealt with are then summarised in a report. To effectively resolve the problem the student will need to apply problem solving and decision making skills and identify any relevant theories or frameworks. For example, if the major issue of the case study relates to valuing investments, then a review of concepts discussed in textbooks or lectures, such as net present value fundamentals, would be useful.

Cotesta et al (1998, p.38) suggests that there are generally two types of case studies:

1. The problem-oriented case study – this requires a specific problem to be analysed and a solution found.

2. The analytical case study – that does not require a specific solution, rather an analysis of the situation, with consideration of possible future directions.

A case study report is generally the same as a business report, however the difference is that a case study report will focus on analysing the question(s) being asked and it's resolution. The general approach to a case study should be:

1. Read and gain a clear understanding of the facts, issues and problem(s).

2. Identify and focus on the question(s) being asked.

3. Consider the facts given about the problem(s) and any assumptions that need to be made.
   - Do the facts give enough information?
   - If appropriate, prioritise the problem(s).
   - Are the assumptions valid?
   - From whose perspective have the facts been given?
   - What has changed or how has the problem arisen?

4. Analyse the specific problem(s) or issues raised.
   - Identify relevant theoretical concepts that provide a useful framework for analysis.
   - Consider bias in viewpoints.
   - Consider any constraints relating to the problem(s).
   - What criteria are to be used for the analysis?
   - How can the problem(s) be brought to resolution?

5. Implement appropriate recommendations that will effectively resolve the problem(s).
   - Devise an action plan, if appropriate.
   - Be conscious of any constraints discussed in the case study.

6. Write up your case study report.
   - Draft
   - Write finished report

The structure of the report should complement the issues raised in the case study facts. The specific issues should be dealt with individually, but also the cumulative effect of the issues should be considered. The presentation and layout of the report should enable the reader to clearly see the problem(s) that exist and the potential solutions or path to resolution. The report would normally contain the following:

- Title Page.
- Executive Summary.
- Table of Contents.
- Introduction.
- Body of Report (identify issues, impacts and other relevant factors).
- Conclusions and Recommendations.
- End notes/Bibliography.
- Appendices.

Oral Presentation

In your business career and personal life, you will need to present your arguments, requests and cases to a variety of people in different circumstances. Use your time at University to learn how to present effectively, and practice giving presentations in a relatively safe and non-threatening (or non-critical) environment.

The Golden Rule of presentations is practice makes perfect. After you have practised sufficiently, your self-confidence will improve markedly, and your credibility will improve accordingly. Practice (with a stopwatch, preferably) in front of a friendly but constructively critical audience – then take their feedback the right way (ie, constructively) and incorporate the desired changes into your presentation.

The Second Rule is – planning eliminates most worries – and most errors. Everybody gets nervous (the old “butterflies in the tummy” feeling) when delivering to an audience. Experienced speakers simply disguise their nervousness better than amateurs do, because they know that they have prepared (ie, planned and practiced) as well as possible.

Plan your presentation as an oral presentation – it is not just a matter of standing up and reading your pre-prepared written report (this can be boring as well as unprofessional). A proper oral presentation supporting a written report tries to encapsulate the major points in summary form and presents them using a combination of visual and aural impacts – this is a far more powerful, persuasive and memorable form of communication than use of the written word alone.

Additional points worth noting in an oral presentation are:

- Sloppy or inappropriate attire does not project the desired professional or business-like approach required in having your message accepted.
- Use aids (overheads, PowerPoint, video, audio, and handouts) in a planned manner, and only after having practiced with them prior to the presentation time.
- Do not fill an overhead or slide with a lot of small text. A “busy” overhead (and/or an overhead with spelling mistakes) will distract an audience. Slides and/or overheads must be legible.
- Ensure you speak to and have eye contact with your audience, not the aids.

- Use a pencil, ballpoint pen or other pointer positioned accurately on top of an overhead to focus the audience's attention on the item you are currently discussing.
- Arrange to have all necessary equipment supplied to the room; and check that it has arrived before the required time.
- Never assume that the equipment works just because it is there. Check it personally.
- Do not put your hands in your pockets or fiddle with items during your presentation as this is distracting to the audience.

Exam Techniques

Towards the end of a subject most lecturers will provide students with an outline or discuss what will be covered in the end of semester exam. The following are some general thoughts on strategies to ensure a successful exam outcome.

1. Make sure you understand the nature and format of the exam paper. Are there a number of essay questions to be answered, or a series of multiple-choice questions, true/false questions, short answer questions, or a combination of the above?

2. Be aware of what topics will and will not be covered in the exam. Also note the time spent on topics and emphasis placed on a particular topic by the lecturer.

3. Review and make sure you understand your lecture notes, tutorial question solutions, and your own summary of the relevant textbook chapters.

4. Review, summarise and ensure an understanding of all additional references or readings associated with the topic(s) that will be examined.

5. At this stage in the semester you should already have a good grasp of the topics and the various themes and concepts associated with the topic. If you don't, then you have not sufficiently understood the topics and should review your understanding in preparation for the exam.

6. Although not always possible, see if you can look at past exam papers to familiarise yourself with the format of the exam paper and the themes/issues covered. Do not assume answers to past exams will be readily available. Often lecturers will not make these available as it may promote a belief that students only have to know the concepts covered in that particular paper. Remember that exam content and emphasis may differ from year to year.

7. Always prepare more topics than required in the exam. If you are required to write three essays, prepare five essay topics.

8. Attempt to frame your own exam questions and write answers to the questions. If you are studying with other students, this task will be of particular benefit to all involved.

During the exam:

1. During the reading time, read each question slowly and make sure you understand what is being asked and clarify anything you are unsure of.

2. Plan out your answer before you start writing.

3. If alternative questions are available, decide which questions you will answer.

4. Use diagrams and graphs to complement, not repeat what you are writing about. Make sure you correctly label your diagram/graph – this includes axes and all curves.

5. In an open book exam, make sure your materials are well organised and you are able to find relevant information quickly in the text – use highlighting pens or stick-on markers. Short summaries can be useful in these situations.

6. Try and leave some time at the end of your exam to read through your answers so you can make any necessary changes and/or add more to your existing answer.

7. Use the marks available for each question as a guide to how much time you should spend on the question

Undertaking Research

Introduction

Undertaking academic research can be both a complex and rewarding activity. This section is designed for students undertaking independent research or participating in research based programs such as Honours or Masters. Research is much more than merely stating who said what and when, it is a journey where you will learn more about your own strengths and limitations. Further, research can take many forms:

- A major or minor thesis.
- A series of related papers.
- A report or project based on current business issues.
- An interactive product such as a website, CDROM, video, or computer program.

Before you start writing up your research report or thesis you will need to understand and appreciate the following five issues:

- Getting Started
- Ethics
- Choosing a Topic
- Research Proposal
- Research Process

These issues provide the 'big picture' associated with research and will better prepare you for writing up your research report or thesis. Although the issues that follow relate more to the traditional written major or minor academic dissertation, they will nevertheless have some relevance to alternative research formats.

Getting Started

When starting out on a research project or thesis for the first time, the jargon can be a little confusing. The following definitions and examples may help to clarify some key concepts you will encounter throughout the process of your research.

Concepts

A concept is an abstract representation. For example, the concept of 'marketing' creates a picture for each of us, depending on our experience. We save time and energy by using a concept rather than sorting through individual meanings and detail every time we encounter an object, event or phenomenon. Most of us have shared concepts that we all understand. Some are universal, some cultural or societal. For example the concept of “family” may differ depending on many variables such as age, gender, experience and cultural background.

A concept map enables us to depict our understanding of the various aspects of a concept and their relationships in diagrammatic form. It is often a useful starting point in developing an understanding of a concept.

Constructs

Constructs link a number of concepts into a framework. A construct may be something as concrete as ‘Swinburne University’ or as intangible as ‘workplace morale’. We can use observable concepts to measure this construct. For example, we can measure concepts such as productivity, number of days of sick leave taken and staff turnover. There are other concepts that are not so easy to measure however, such as company loyalty, general happiness and staff motivation.

Theory

A theory takes the ideas formed by combining concepts into constructs and develops them further. Where constructs describe what is happening, theories attempt to analyse relations between concepts in order to explain an event or phenomenon.

Theories can be developed using deductive or inductive reasoning. Deductive reasoning begins with a hypothesis or research question and then tests it by gathering and analysing data, usually using statistical methods. Inductive methods begin by gathering data to determine and test a theory.

Theories are used to explain existing situations as well as potential ones. In conducting research, the researcher often sets out to prove (or disprove) one or more theories.

Models

Models go even further than theories. Models provide a full explanation of a set of relationships, assumptions and interactions. A simple customer service model based on Page and Mayer (2000, p.7) is presented on the next page.

In order for a construct to be defined as a model:

- all elements must be clearly defined,
- relationships between elements and assumptions made must be explained, and
- the relative importance of each element must be explained.

The purpose of a model is to test it, apply it and make predictions based upon it.

Selection of staff who are above average on a particular set of characteristics (sociability, self-confidence, tendency to smile easily)

PLUS

Staff Training

WILL LEAD TO

Better customer service.

All of these characteristics plus training and better service will predict

INCREASED REPEAT PURCHASING.

Ethics

Ethics are norms and statements of behaviour that guide moral choices. The aim of ethics in research is to ensure that no one is harmed or suffers negative consequences from the research and that resources are not wasted. While this is usually the case, it is possible that someone may suffer injury due to the research or research method. This may include situations such as violating non-disclosure agreements, deceiving people, breaking confidentiality and misinterpreting results.

There is no single solution or approach to ethical issues. Codes and regulations guide researchers and review boards such as the Swinburne University of Technology Ethics Committee help researchers examine their research proposals for ethical dilemmas. Careful planning and discussion with your supervisor can overcome most ethics based problems.

Before you begin to work with subjects or respondents, permission to undertake the research must be sought from the appropriate Swinburne Ethics Committee. Application forms can be found at:

http://www.swin.edu.au/research/ethics

You should discuss the issue of ethics as it relates to your research with your supervisor.

Choosing a Topic

For your project to be successful, you need to enjoy your research. The whole of the research process is not always enjoyable; there will be times when it will become boring and tedious. However, if your topic is relevant and interesting to you, it is easier to keep your eyes on the big picture and push through the more mundane aspects of the research process, keeping your particular goal or outcome in mind.

As well as choosing a topic that fires your imagination, you need to keep in mind some practicalities. Your topic, or at least the depth of your study, will be tempered by time, technological and financial constraints.

The topic you choose should not be too broad or too narrow. A topic that is too broad will only serve to encourage you to write a research report that is broad and does not identify specific issues or arguments within the area being discussed. Such broad topics will normally mean that the report is "newspaper style" in that it only identifies the issue and does not analyse the implications of the issue.

Choosing an interesting topic and then being able to define a research or thesis question can stem from:

- attending a conference or seminar,
- reading around the topic area,
- having discussions with various members of staff,
- industry experience, and/or
- brainstorming.

In relation to the last point, brainstorming is a method of lateral thinking that is usually done with others to generate ideas that may not have been obvious when working alone. In your working life, it is likely that you will brainstorm with colleagues many times during the course of the week without even realising that the process is occurring. Brainstorming creates synergy in that ideas suggested by others generate new ideas for you.

Having established a research topic, it is often useful to map your ideas to keep in mind where you are going and also enable you to keep the 'big picture' in focus. Similar to a flow chart, concept mapping is a way of organising knowledge. However, a concept map goes beyond the typical outline in that concept maps communicate relationships between concepts, including bi-directional relationships.

Concept mapping is a useful tool in all stages of research. Your project will change as you work through the research process but it is important for you to have a map of your journey on one single page. Working on a concept map of your project also ensures that you can easily and effectively communicate what you are doing to others. Once completed, a concept map is a visual graphic that represents your thinking about a topic. It illustrates how you have organised knowledge.

Research Proposal

The purpose of a research or thesis proposal, according to Cooper and Emory (1995, p.78) is to:

- Present the topic to be researched and identify its importance.
- Discuss the research efforts of others that have worked on related topics.
- Suggest a research methodology for the topic which includes how the data will be gathered, treated and interpreted.
- Gain approval for your research topic from your supervisor or subject convenor or University Research Board.

A proposal may also be known as a work plan, prospectus, outline, statement of intent or draft. It should inform your audience of:

- What will be done?
- Why it will be done?
- How will it build on existing knowledge?
- How it will be done?
- Where it will be done?
- For whom it will be done?
- What is the benefit of doing it?

The research proposal is a map showing your beginning point, your destination and how you are going to get there. The proposal should include any potential problems you may encounter and how you plan to avoid or work around the detours. Although the structure of individual proposals can vary, depending on purpose and audience, a framework or guide is often useful for making a start. Your proposal may include some or all of the elements below. Your supervisor should discuss with you what is required when submitting a research proposal.

Executive Summary

This is an abstract informing the reader of the essentials of your proposal without having to read the whole document. It should include a brief statement of the topic, the research question and/or research objectives, and the benefits of your particular approach or design.

Problem Statement

In this section you state the topic to be examined, its background and the consequences or need for research. A problem that is too broad cannot be addressed by one study.

Research Objectives

It is in this section that you propose exactly what is being planned by the research. The list of research objectives should either move from the general to the specific, or in order of importance.

Literature Review

Neuman (1994, p.80) suggests that the aim of a Literature Review is to:

- Demonstrate a familiarity with a body of knowledge and establish credibility.
- Show the path of prior research and how the current project is linked to it.
- Integrate and summarise what is known in an area.
- Learn from others and stimulate new ideas.

The literature review examines recent or historically significant studies, data or records, reports and journal articles that are the basis for your own research. A brief review of the information is all that is required at this stage. Emphasise only the important conclusions and results of other studies, any relevant trends, and previous successful and unsuccessful research designs.

There are many sources of information that can lead you to a comprehensive review of your topic. The University Library homepage is an excellent resource and starting place.

The Importance of the Study

This section allows you to briefly describe the benefits of your research. If you have a problem writing this section, then your understanding of the problem may need some review.

Research Design

In this section you need to tell your supervisor what method you are going to take to complete the project. You will need to discuss each phase of the project and provide information about your proposed design such as – sample selection and size, data collection method, data analysis method, and ethical requirements. You will need to be able to defend why your approach is the most appropriate.

It may help if you keep asking yourself "why am I doing this?" You almost certainly have no chance of convincing someone else if you cannot convince yourself.

Nature of the Results

The supervisor should be able to read this section and discover that goals for each of the research objectives have been covered. You need to specify the types of data you will obtain, where the data will be stored and who actually owns the information. Ethics requirements may impact on this.

Qualifications of the Researcher

You do not have to include your whole curriculum vitae here, but should list any academic qualifications held, starting with the highest degree achieved. In a business environment, often experience in the relevant area is just as important and should be included.

Budget

Budget implications and considerations should be included if your supervisor requests them.

Timeline

Each major phase should have an estimated time schedule and list any people assigned to work for you. Be realistic about your resources. If you are conducting your research alone, think about other demands on your time.

Project Management

If you are working with others on this project, then you need to show how the research team is organised. More than just a schedule, the plan should describe not only the team's organisation, but procedures, relationships, financial and legal responsibilities and management competencies.

Bibliography and Referencing

All projects that require a literature review also require a bibliography. If no specific format is required then a standard style such as the Harvard System may be used. Details on writing a bibliography and referencing can be found in earlier sections of this Presentation Style Guide.

Appendices

A glossary of terms should be included where you are working in a specific environment and where the general community may not understand the words or acronyms. An appendix should also include where appropriate, measuring instruments (such as questionnaires) and other material that may be of interest to your supervisor and, where appropriate, your examiners.

Research Process

The research process involves five steps.

1. Formulate the Problem

Understanding and defining the problem is a major key to successful research. This requires the researcher to clearly understand the background to the problem, identify the problem and not its symptoms, the unit of analysis to be used, and identify the relevant variables.

Exploratory research allows you to gain a greater insight and clearer idea of the problem to be researched. This can be achieved by either:

- Examining Secondary Data
  Secondary data is simply data that you have not collected yourself – journal articles, company reports, and census data. Secondary data results from another's research, therefore, primary data is that which you have collected yourself. In your literature search you will come across secondary data that is related to your own research and may provide a background to your research problem.

- Undertaking Experience Surveys
  Talking to relevant people to obtain insights into the relationships between variables.

- Undertaking Pilot Studies
  A technique that uses sampling but does not apply rigorous standards.

At this stage you also need to have a hypothesis. A hypothesis is an educated guess about a problem solution. A research hypothesis is a statement that asserts that two concepts (ideas) are related in a specific way.

2. Determine the Research Design

Research design is the framework or plan for your study that guides the collection and analysis of data. Based on your research objective, designs can be classified as either being:

Observational	The objective of observational research is to clarify and gain insights and ideas by observing existing situations. It is concerned with determining the relationship between two variables.
Causal	This research design identifies the cause and effect relationship between variables. An example of a causal study question would be – *“Does smoking cause cancer?”* Causality research should try to establish the appropriate causal order or sequence of events, and measure the variation between the presumed cause and the presumed effect. Causality research may also involve field experimentation and/or laboratory experiments. Care needs to be taken to ensure that what appears to be a causal relationship is not actually being created by other factors.

3. Planning the Sample

This is the process of selecting a sufficient number of elements from the population so that by studying a sample, you are able to generalise the properties or characteristics to the population elements. Sampling techniques can be divided into probability sampling and non-probability sampling.

4. Determine Data Collection Methods

Data can be collected in a variety of ways, in different settings, and from different sources. For example, the following methods can be used to collect data:

- Face-to-face interviews.
- Telephone interviews.
- Computer-assisted interviews.
- Questionnaires
  - Personally administered.
  - Sent through the mail.
  - Electronically administered.
- Observation of individuals and events.

Sources of data can be either primary (directly from individuals, focus groups or a panel of respondents) or secondary. A secondary data source is information that is relevant to your study, but has been collected for some other purpose.

5. Data Analysis and Interpretation

Having collected the data from a representative sample of the population, the next step is to analyse the data so that the research hypotheses can be tested. Data analysis involves:

- Selecting a data analysis tool.
- Getting data ready for analysis – that is editing, coding, categorising, and filing data.
- Getting a feel for the data – having an idea how the respondents reacted to the items in the questionnaire and how good the items and measures are – usually done through a pilot study.
- Testing the Goodness of the Data – this relates to the reliability of the measuring instruments used, the validity of instrument results and the sensitivity of stimuli or responses.
- Testing the Hypotheses – use of descriptive statistics (frequencies, measures of central tendencies and dispersion) or inferential statistics (Pearson correlation, Chi-square test, t-test, and or multiple regression analysis).

At this point you are now ready to write your Research Report.

The Research Report/Thesis – A Guide

The purpose of a research report or thesis is to provide a documented record of your work and to communicate your process and findings to an audience. Your report may also provide a basis for management decision making. Clear and logical communication is the key to a good research report or thesis. Many researchers make the mistake of making their report or thesis so complicated and technical, that it becomes unintelligible to the lay person. Keep in mind the people who will be reading your report.

The style or format of your report may depend on a number of criteria. Some reports are more formal than others, and the way in which you present your report should reflect that level of formality. Further, in an educational institution, you will usually be required to submit three bound copies of your research report or thesis. These are issues that you should discuss with your supervisor for clarification.

Below is a short guide to one format only. Please note that formats may vary from one context to another and indeed from one reference guide to another. Remember that your task is to provide a clear, logical and concise report of your research in whatever format is considered appropriate. Some components listed below may not be necessary for you to use.

Title Page

The title page should include:

- The title of the report – usually in capital letters.
- Author's name – usually in capital letters.
- Name of the Course and year of submission.
- A Statement as to the purpose of the submission, for example:

This report is submitted for assessment as part of the requirements for the
Master of Business (eBusiness and Communication) Degree
at Swinburne University of Technology, Lilydale.

Acknowledgments

This is where you are able to thank the people/institutions that have assisted you in conducting your research.

Declaration/Statement of Authorship

This is usually University policy and requires you to acknowledge authorship and originality of the work submitted. You must sign and date this declaration.

Table of Contents

The contents page should bear the name of each chapter (and sub headings) of the report /thesis and the page upon which they begin.

Abstract

An abstract or synopsis may be a condensed version (no more than 400 words) of the whole report or a summary of the major findings, conclusions and recommendations. Therefore, you should write this section last.

List of Abbreviations

List of Tables/Charts/Graphs/Illustrations

Introduction

Purpose of the Study
Background
Statement of the Problem
Organisation of the Study

Literature Review

Data and Methodology

Hypotheses
Data Description
Limitations
Methodology

Analysis of Results

This is probably the longest section of the report. Be selective about what you report. Only include data if the material is important to the readers' understanding of the problem and the findings.

Conclusion/Recommendations

It is important to reach some conclusion rather than leave the readers to make up their own minds. In academic research, recommendations are often the basis for further research.

Appendices

In this section you should include any complex tables, statistical tests, supporting documents, copies of questionnaires, instructions to field workers, or any other necessary documentation.

Bibliography

Use of any secondary data requires a bibliography. The Harvard Style should be followed for citation and referencing.

Further Reading

Anderson, J. and Poole, M. 1998, *Assignment and Thesis Writing*, Jacaranda Wiley Ltd, Brisbane.

Commonwealth of Australia. 1994, *Style Manual for authors, editors and printers*, 5th Ed, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra.

Cooper, D.R. and Emory, C.W. 1995, *Business Research Methods*, McGraw-Hill, USA.

Cotesta, P.V., Crosling, G.M. and Murphy, H.M. 1998, *Writing for Accounting Students*, Butterworths, Sydney.

Creedy, J. 2001, 'Starting Research', *The Australian Economic Review*, March, pp.116-24.

Enright, C. 1991, *Studying Law*, 4th Ed, Braxton Press, Acton.

Kaplan, B. 1999, *Editing Made Easy: secrets of the professionals*, Printset, McKinnon, Victoria.

Krever, R. 1995, *Mastering Law Studies and Law Exam Techniques*, 3rd Ed, Butterworths, Sydney.

Malhotra, N.K., Hall, J., Shaw, M., and Crisp, M. 1996, *Marketing Research: An Applied Orientation*, Prentice-Hall, Sydney.

McLean, P. and Tatnall, A. 2000, *Studying Business at University*, Allen & Unwin, St.Leonards.

Morris, G., Cook, C., Creyke, R. and Geddes, R. 1996, *Laying Down the Law,* 4th Ed, Butterworths, Sydney.

Neuman, W.L. 1994, *Social Research Methods*, Allyn and Bacon, Boston.

Page, C. and Meyer, D. 2000, *Applied Research Design for Business and Management*, McGraw-Hill, Sydney.

Rohrer, T. and Dinmore, I. 2001, *Easy Ways to Get A's*, Vantage Press, New York.

Seitz, A. and Betts, K. 1994, *Writing Essays and Research Reports in the Social Sciences,* Nelson, Melbourne.

Sullivan, T.J. and DeJong, C.R. 1998, *Applied Social Research; Tool for the Human Services*, Harcourt, Brace & Co. Orlando, USA.

Summers, J. and Smith, B. 2003, *Communication Skills Handbook: how to succeed in written and oral communication*, John Wiley and Sons Australia Ltd, Queensland.

Swinburne University of Technology [n.d.], *How to Find Out Bibliographies, References and Footnotes*, Campus Libraries, Hawthorn.

Taylor, G. 1989, *The Student's Writing Guide for the Arts and Social Sciences*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Venolia, J. 1988, *Write Right!*, Ten Speed Press, California, USA.

Waller, L. 2000, *Derham, Maher and Waller: An Introduction to Law*, 8th Ed, LBC Information Services, Pyrmont.

Zikmund, W.G. 1994, *Business Research Methods*, 4th Ed, The Dryden Press, Orlando, USA.