**Graduate Skills - Report Guidance**

**Structure**

Your report should use the following structure.

* **Front cover**

Include your name, student ID number, course, name of Personal Tutor (i.e. the person who runs your lab session), and the title\* of your report.

*\*see information on page 3 - Can I reword the title for the report cover?*

* **Abstract**

Approximately 150-250 words. The Abstract is a summary of the key content of the report. It should give an overview of the topics you’ve discussed, and what conclusions you came to. The idea of an abstract is that someone can read it, and then decide whether or not the report is relevant to their interests. The Abstract should be on a separate page, and is normally written last.

* **Contents page**

A list of the report headings, with page numbers.

* **Introduction**

The Introduction tells the reader what the report will discuss. Ideally, it will include a **general statement**, a **thesis** statement, and a **route map**.

**General statement** – the broad context of the report.

**Thesis statement** – explains more specifically the topic/arguments being explored in the report.

**Route map** – tells the reader how you will explore the topic.

See ‘How to approach the Introduction’ on page 2.

* **Main body**

The main body is where you present the various arguments related to your chosen topic. You will need to decide on section headings. Because this is not a technical/scientific report, **you** **do not** **need a Method or Results section**.

* **Conclusion**

The Conclusion section is where you give your person view on your chosen topic. You should link your conclusion back to the discussion in the main body (what key points in the discussion swayed your opinion one way or the other).

* **References**

Lists the sources you have cited in the report, presented using the [MMU Harvard](https://www.mmu.ac.uk/library/referencing-and-study-support/referencing/mmu-harvard) referencing style.

**Formatting guidance**

**Font and spacing**

You should use a plain font such as Arial or Calibri. Font size should be 11pt or 12pt. Use 1.5 line spacing.

**Numbering**

You should number the report sections, starting with the Introduction.

Pages should be numbered, starting with the page after the Contents page.

**Other information**

**How to approach the introduction**

Below is an example of an introduction to illustrate the use of a general statement, thesis statement and route map. This is a short introduction, and yours is likely to be a bit longer. The route map here is only one sentence, but would commonly be a few more.

**The general statement, the thesis statement and the route map.**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is an area of computer science related to developing ‘smart’ computer systems which can perform tasks that would normally be performed by humans. AI is used behind the scenes of many applications used by millions of people every day, such as social media applications, where it can, for example, learn about your preferences so as to serve you content that matches your interests. AI relies heavily on data. This report will consider some of the ethical issues related to the data that drives AI. If the data set used to train an AI system is biased in any way, the decisions made by the AI system will also be biased. This topic will be explored by investigating the use of AI for decision-making within the criminal justice system.

**What’s included in the word count?**

The word count for a report is normally based on the text in the main body, including the headings and Introduction. The Abstract and References are not included.

MS Word will show the word count for your document in the bottom left of the document window. If you select a section of text it will show the word count for the selection.

**What’s the difference between the Abstract and Introduction?**

The Abstract gives an overview of the whole of the report, whereas the Introduction sets the context for the discussion that follow in the main body.

**Can I reword the title for the report cover?**

You can create a shorter version of the title for the front cover of your report. For example, the following report topic could have the title “Will we ever have truly driverless cars?”. You could then put the full question (i.e. the text below, on a page after the cover page).

* One of the key debates related to autonomous cars is around road safety, and who is ultimately responsible in the event of an accident.  Some people argue that we can never have truly driverless cars because a human should always be ready to intervene to prevent accidents.  To what extent do you agree or disagree with this point of view?

**How much can I quote and paraphrase?**

Quotes should be one or two sentences at most. Paraphrasing should be used sparingly and only when you are acknowledging the ideas of someone else. The discussion should be in your own words.

**Can I write the Conclusion in first person?**

Yes you can. You are writing about your personal opinion in the Conclusion, so it’s fine to use “I”.

**What should I name my Word document?**

You should submit a single Word document, which includes the report, followed by your Skills Audit and Reflection.

Your document should be named using the following naming convention:

*Surname\_Initials\_StudentID.docx*

**What does ‘complete’ mean with regards to the Skills Audit?**

* Scores have been applied to all traits listed in each section.
* You have rated yourself for each skill.
* Where you have indicated that you feel competent in a skill, and have examples to evidence it, you have written your examples in the ‘Evidence’ box.