HOW TO WRITE THE REPORT FOR YOUR PROJECT?

Above all, **do not copy-paste sentences or paragraphs from other sources**, unless you are using a properly referenced quote. **Do not use a paraphrasing tool.** Plagiarism or collusion will be reported, and appropriate penalties will apply, see
https://www.latrobe.edu.au/students/admin/academic-integrity.

The reports must be written in the style of a scientific or technical research report. In particular, you need to use formal language and in-text citations. In-text citations are especially important in your introduction, where you will be referring to relevant literature to establish context and set the scene. In-text citations should appear throughout your report wherever you refer to facts or the work of others. Make sure you are clear and concise in your writing and avoid spelling and grammar mistakes.

Do not explicitly write about yourself, your experiences or about the collaboration within the team. Phrases like, "I had a great time working on the software project and I learned the value of teamwork" **should be avoided**. Such things are not relevant in a scientific or technical research report. Your goal is to explain to the reader: the problem you are trying to solve; other existing work on the problem (i.e., context); the method used to solve the problem; the quantitative and qualitative findings as a result of your method; and suggestions for future work on the problem.

By the end of your placement you will hopefully know a lot more than your audience about the problem(s) that you are trying to solve. This means you should make an effort to clearly define any technical term that you use. You should treat the reader as if they are a scientist or technician who is not an expert in that particular area.

Figures are an excellent tool to aid you in presenting your results to your reader clearly. Your figures should have captions and figure labels appearing *below* the figure. Your tables should have captions and table labels appearing *above* the table. Every figure and table should be referred to in the text somewhere: for example, "in Figure 1 we see that…"

HERE IS A RESEARCH REPORT STRUCTURE TEMPLATE:

Abstract

An abstract should summarise the whole report. So, it needs to summarise: all questions that were investigated, the methods used, the major findings, the interpretations and conclusions. It should also capture your audience's attention by making the report appear useful or interesting to your audience while maintaining a neutral and scientific tone. Try to be succinct and informative throughout your whole report. Always avoid stating the obvious.

Introduction

The structure of the introduction should flow from more general in the beginning to very specific at the end. Start the introduction by clearly identifying the subject area of interest. Then, provide a brief and balanced literature review, to establish **context**. This review should explain to the reader what people knew about the problem(s) before your study. Then, you should lead the reader to your very specific statement of purpose / hypothesis. It is important to be very clear about the statement of purpose.

A good way to think of an introduction is that it answers these questions (only): What was studied? Why was it an important question? What did people know about it before this study? How will the study advance our knowledge?

Methodology

In this section, you should explain clearly *how* you carried out your study. It should be organised to express the logical flow of your experiment/modelling procedures. This section should be like a verbal description of the conduct of the procedure, with figures and diagrams to aid in understanding. There should be enough detail that other scientists could read it and repeat your work to verify your findings. You should also indicate what software and which algorithms were used. Remember that the methodology section should be ordered to reflect the actual logical flow of your procedures.

One or more sections describing what you have done

Here you should focus on the novel aspects of your work and describe what you have *achieved*. This is not like the methods section, you are not describing the steps that you took. Instead, here you are clearly describing exactly what is novel about your work to give your audience a summary of your contribution to their knowledge or understanding. You may also present and discuss your results in these sections. If there are any limitations to your work, then describe these to clarify the boundaries of your contribution.

Further Work

Give suggestions for how future work can move beyond the boundaries of your contribution. Be realistic: You've already established the limitations of your work. Can future studies overcome those limitations? Do your results suggest that certain investigations would be worth investing time and money into?

Conclusion

This should be *very* similar to the abstract. The difference is that you should assume here that the reader has read the rest of the report. You should not include any new material or discussion here.

References

Your references should follow a known style such as the APA or Harvard referencing style. You should have in-text citations throughout your report that provide your audience with sources for further detailed reading. Your in-text citations should also be used to appropriately acknowledge the work of other authors (to avoid plagiarism and to provide citations for so-called 'facts').

Appendices

Here you can include material which would interrupt the flow of the report if it was placed in the main body of the report. This could be the computer code that you have written.