**Writing your Report**

Relevant chapters in ‘Awesome Projects’ book: 2, 3, 4 and 5.

The Report will be read by at least two members of staff, and marks are awarded for the Report independently of any other work that you submit, whether that is software, data, or proofs.

**Structure of the Report**

The appropriate structure of the Report varies according to the scientific, engineering, or business research method that you have used, the features you have chosen to emphasise, and the degree title you are pursuing. It is your responsibility to make sure that you are clear about where your project's contribution (‘novel contribution to knowledge’) lies and that all work is explained clearly and in the correct format.

The following Report structure should therefore be seen as a guide only. It is probably the case that few Reports will stick to it rigidly. It is your responsibility to consult with your Supervisor and adapt to suit your particular project. Types of problem solving project other than software development projects are likely to need a different structure.

1. **Title page (Mandatory)**, including title, author, student ID, degree title, name of Supervisor, name of institution ('Department of Computing, Coventry University’) Date of submission.
2. **Statement of Originality. (Mandatory) –** This is a one page, signed statement. A pro-forma will be provided. It is your signed statement that you have not plagiarised the work in part or in full.
3. **Preamble**, including (a) Table of Contents; (b) Abstract (suggested length: half a page); (c) Acknowledgements.

**Abstract** should be a *succinct and self-standing*summary of the basis, context and achievements of the project. Minimally an abstract does three things: (1) It states the problem that you set out to solve, (2) It describes your solution and method, (3) It states a conclusion about the success of the solution. Be straightforward and factual and avoid vague statements, confusing details and "hype". Do not be tempted to use acronyms or jargon to keep within the half-page limit. Consider that search engines, librarians and non-computer scientists wishing to classify your Report rely on the abstract. You may if you wish provide a short list of keywords (2-6 is reasonable) at the end of the abstract.

1. **Introduction**. In this section, you should describe the problem that you set out to solve with the project. An introduction might, for example, begin by stating, "The aim of the work described in this Report was to provide a software tool with which people can arrange meetings." Avoid starting a Report with an irrelevant history of information technology. For example, the following would not be a good introductory sentence, "Since Bill Gates launched Outlook people have been using technology to arrange meetings."

Explain whatever background the reader will need in order to understand the problem. The background might refer to previous work in the academic literature that provides evidence that the problem is a real and significant problem worth solving. The background may identify a community, organisation or set of users that will benefit from your research. Include a clear and detailed statement of the project aims and provide an overview of the structure of the solution.

**CRITICAL!** Use the introduction to define any terms or jargon that you will be using throughout the rest of the report. Why? Because people define and understand terms differently from one another. Your definition of ‘cloud computing’ may be different to your supervisor’s definition of ‘cloud computing’. By stating your definition clearly you can avoid misunderstandings of your work.

Conventionally, the last part of the introduction outlines the remainder of the Report, explaining what comes in each section – keep this brief.

1. **Literature Review (Mandatory**). Please read Chapter 4 of ‘Awesome Projects’. A lecture will be given on literature reviews.
2. **Method:**  This chapter should describe what you did to answer your research question (or to support your thesis, if you think of it that way), and how you went about it (essentially your research design). You should describe your research design in sufficient detail that another researcher could recreate your work to check your results.
3. **Evaluation / Results:** In this chapter, you should evaluate what you have done, and say what answer (to your research question) you have arrived at. It may be that in your method you describe some experiments, and this section records your results and analysis of those results. This is an important section -- most students gain or lose marks in either their literature review or evaluation. The key to producing a convincing evaluation is to plan very early in the project what information or results you will need to write this section.
4. **Discussion.** Here you will summarise your achievements and also the deficiencies of your project. You can also say what you would or could have done, if you had had more time or if things had worked out differently. It is important to be completely honest about the deficiencies and inadequacies of your work, such as they are. Part of your aim is to demonstrate your ability to recognise problems that remain.
5. **A reflection on the management of your project and the social, legal or ethical issues that you needed to consider, including your response to feedback from your presentation** (**Mandatory)**. Your first supervisor may have a very good idea of how well you tackled your project - however second supervisors may not have any idea. For this reason you need to include an account of the conduct of the project. What problems you encountered, how you overcame them, how diligently you worked, how you sought advice, how you responded to feedback. This chapter will be evidence driven – which is why you need to keep a log or diary of your project, maybe a project management timeline with milestones, keep evidence of each supervision meeting (signed off by your supervisor), Keep notes of supervisor feedback to your presentation and reflect on them in this chapter.
6. **Conclusion.** Give a brief statement of how the solution that you have provided addresses the problem stated in the introduction. Provide an evaluative statement based on the results. You should not introduce new material.
7. **References** For your Final Year project it is required that you cite and reference work to which you owe an intellectual debt. It is required that you cite and reference work that provides supporting evidence. It is required that you cite and reference work so that the reader can find the sources that have been quoted. (remember that we use the Harvard system of ‘in text citations’ and a list of references at the back of the report. There will be a lecture on this)
8. **Appendices.**  (More on these later)

**A List of mandatory elements to be included with your report**

* Statement of Originality
* Certificate of Ethical Approval
* A copy of your original ‘detailed project proposal’ (appendix)
* Signed supervisor meeting records (appendix)
* Feedback notes from your presentation (appendix)