

# Lesson Reviews advice

The lesson review aims at assessing your conceptual understanding on the topic. Keep in mind that we are aware that many of you are not familiar with this exercise and that we will work with you this trimester to help you improve on it. At the same time the importance of this task should not be underestimated. Almost all of you will be required to write documentation that contains technical content. So, learning to write clear and technical texts that demonstrate clear mastery of the content is a skill you will be practising here.

To get you started, I have some practical advice. As a rule of thumb, aim for your summary to be about 1 page. It can be longer, and it's fine: it can be hard to condense everything you have to say in 1 page. It is also possible that it is shorter, though in that case ask yourself if you really have summarised the module completely.

Below I am giving a collection of advice based on what I have observed over the trimesters that worked well (or not), and feedback that I have given.

## Practical Advice

**The summary should be personal** The goal is to identify and review the most important concepts in the module. Just like everyone has their own personal approach to learning, everyone will take out slightly different messages about the topic. The summary of the module should be *your* summary: what *you* think is important and relevant. A good strategy is to write the summary for your future self: imagine that in a later unit you need to revisit the topic<sup>1</sup>, what should you include in your summary for a quick refresher?

**Write your summary as you go** It is much more efficient to write down your notes and reflections as you progress through the module than trying to recap everything once you've completed it. That will ensure that you don't forget things. Then, after

---

<sup>1</sup>This is **not** hypothetical, if this unit is core in your degree this is likely to happen, so you might as well kill two birds with one stone and write something that is useful for yourself.

completing the module, review your notes to give them a bit of structure and your summary should be in good shape.

**Structure your text** Adding some structure to your text will make it *a lot* more readable and understandable:

1. Add sections and headings. Splitting your summary into sections will help you focus your paragraphs on specific items. It makes it easier than trying to say too much in one go;
2. Highlight the new terms (in bold for example), or the terms that your paragraph/section is about. Ideally most paragraphs contain one or two highlighted terms. Then, make sure that each of the bolded terms is defined/explained somewhere before;
3. Use keywords like “definition”, “theorem”, “example”, “method”, etc. to explain what the purpose of your paragraph/sentence. This clearly highlights the purpose of your paragraph, and makes it easier to organise the flow of your summary. For example, you could “define” a term, then provide an “example”, and then discuss how useful it is or give some important “theorems”. You will probably also find that there are only few types of information that you keep in your summary.

**Keep the learning objectives in mind** The learning objectives tell you what skills you are expected to master at the end of the module. Your summary should take that into account. A nice idea is to refer to the MLOs explicitly within your text (say, at the end of paragraphs).

**Avoid a dot point listing of the concepts in the modules without expanding on them.** This is rather useless as far as summaries go: if someone doesn’t know these terms they won’t understand anything, and if someone already knows them, this doesn’t show them if you understand them.