

# Computing Research Project

Writing the report



# Getting started

Novice writers are big procrastinators. They find countless reasons not to get started. Even when they finally get themselves seated at their desks, they always seem to find diversions: make the coffee, sharpen the pencil, go to the bathroom, thumb through more literature, sometimes even get up and return to the field. Remember that you are never 'ready' to write; writing is something you must make a conscious decision to do and then discipline yourself to follow through.  
(Bogdan and Biklen 1982: 172)

# The final writing task

- There are no hard and fast rules about when and how to write
- I do make plans to complete particular sections or even paragraphs at one sitting
- Try to work to an agenda and if I can achieve more than one item
- We all have our own ways of doing things and that's fine

# Structuring the report(For this course)

- Title page
- Acknowledgements
- Aims and purpose of the study
- Review of the literature
- Methods of data collection
- Statement of results
- Analysis and discussion
- Summary and conclusions
- List of references
- Appendices

- Include the **title of your study, your name and the date**.  
The title should accurately reflect the nature of your study and should be brief and to the point. A subtitle may be provided if it clarifies the purposes of the study.

# Acknowledgements

- You may (or may not) wish to acknowledge the help given to you throughout your research. If you do, then acknowledgements and thanks generally come after the title page.

# Aims and purpose of the study

- A brief explanation of the purpose of the research. Explain the research problem in a few sentences.
- State aims/objectives/hypotheses. Provide any background to the study in order to place it in its context.
- You cannot do everything in a small study
- You should make it clear that you know what the limitations of the study are.
- Be honest

# Review of the literature

- Not all reports will require a review of previous research, though for Master's and Doctoral studies a review will normally be expected
- Haywood and Wragg's warning that critical reviews can too often turn out to be uncritical reviews
- A selection has to be made, and only books and articles which relate directly to the topic should be included



# Methods of data collection

- This section explains how the problem was investigated and why particular methods and techniques were employed
- Accounts of the procedure, size of sample, method of selection, choice of variables and controls, and tests of measurement and statistical analysis, if any, should be provided.
- it is unnecessary to describe in detail any tests or procedures which are well known and frequently used
- The research needs to be repeatable

# Statement of results

- This is the heart of the report and will consist of text and, if necessary, tables or figures, depending on the nature of the project.
- Tables, charts, graphs and other figures should illustrate and illuminate the text
- It's customary to place the number and name of tables above the table, and below for figures

# Analysis and discussion

- It's often best to **start** this section with a **restatement of the problem** before discussing how the results affect existing knowledge of the subject.
- If your research aimed to **test certain hypotheses**, then this section should demonstrate whether they **were or were not supported** by the evidence
- Any **deficiencies** in the research doing your research project design should be **mentioned**, with **suggestions about different approaches** which perhaps might have been more appropriate.

# Summary and conclusions

- The main conclusions of the report that have been discussed in section [statements of results] should be summarized here, briefly and simply.
- Read through the whole report and make a note of key points
- Enable readers to understand quite clearly what research has been done and the conclusions that have been drawn from the evidence.

# List of references

- Impress your readers with the scope of your reading
- Justify and support your arguments
- Allow you to make comparisons with other research
- Demonstrate your familiarity with your field of work
- If you adopted the Harvard method of referencing, then references will appear in alphabetical order, which simplifies the process and avoids overlap.

# Appendices

- Copies of any data-collecting instruments (questionnaires, interview schedules, and so on)

# References

- Doing your research project 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, Judith Bell, MC Graw Hill Open University Press