How should I present my report?

- **READ assignment guidelines** in your course outlines. Reading these instructions will inevitably save you hours in that final effort to finish the report.
- **Impress your marker** by making it look like a professional report. You can do this easily because many word processing programs have a report template you can use or adapt.
- **Type your report**: it makes your work easier to read.
- If you need to do **calculations by hand**, adhere to the following guidelines:
  - Rule your page. Put answers to all your calculations in a right hand column. This stops the reader from having to search your page for them.
  - Double space your work. Don't squash visuals and text together.
- Everything must be geared towards **making it easy for your readers**. See our brochure on Technical Writing for additional advice on language and layout of reports.
- **Look at past reports**. The library has thesis reports (hard copy and online) in the collection. Your school also has 4th year honours thesis reports and Masters and PhD thesis reports.

Remember, keep it simple!

1. **What was the original request**? Does your work fulfil the requirements?
2. **What does the audience need/want** from your report? Have you included it?
3. When **editing** your report, retain what is **important/relevant**, delete what is not.
4. Is there much **repetition**? Can you merge or delete sections?
5. Do your **conclusions** come from your findings and not from generalisations? (See example below).

**Example conclusions. . .**

Three academics are travelling on a train through Britain. As the train crosses into Scotland they see a black sheep in a field.

The 1st academic remarks "Oh look, the sheep in Scotland are black". (overgeneralising)

The second academic replies "No, some sheep in Scotland are black". (a reasonable conclusion)

The third academic declares "There is at least one sheep in Scotland that is black on at least one side". (a precise and cautious conclusion)

**Need to know more?**

IF **ALL ELSE FAILS**, revisit your original task analysis and TALK TO YOUR ‘CLIENT’ (lecturer, tutor, marker etc.) and clarify what they want in the report.

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