House Construction Report

L3: Language, Literacies and Learning
Learning & Teaching Unit (LTU)
What is a report?

- inform, analyse or persuade
- scanned quickly by the reader
- abstract or executive summary
- numbered headings and sub-headings
- short, concise paragraphs and dot-points
- use of graphics
- recommendations and/or appendices
The writing process

• Analyse the task/brief
• Word count & due date
• Search for sources
• Read & take notes
• Make a plan
• Draft sections
• Revise & edit
• Check references
• Write final & submit
Structure of a report

beginning  middle  end

preliminary sections  main sections  supplementary sections
Preliminary sections

Title page
Table of contents
Letter of authorisation (if required)
Abstract / Executive Summary
Table of contents

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<td>4</td>
</tr>
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<td>Figure 3</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Footing steelwork finished</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 5</td>
<td>Concrete pour</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 6</td>
<td>Boarding and trowel finishing</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Provides an overview of the entire report
• Helps the reader to develop a quick understanding of WHOLE the report
• Is highly structured
• Is about 150-200 words
• Includes:
  – a sentence or two to set the scene – e.g. Why was it important that you did the site visits? Where was the site?
  – the aims and objectives of the report
  – brief details on how you collected information to include in your report – e.g. How many visits? How did you record your visits?
  – a summary of your findings
  – your recommendations or a suggestion about the next stage
Main sections

Introduction

Body sections & subsections

Recommendations

Conclusion
Introduction:

- **Background** - set the scene
- **Aims/objectives** - purpose of your report, purpose of the site visits
- **Methods** - how you collected information
- **Scope & limitations** – outline what you include in your report, briefly mention what your report does not cover

There are some similarities between the abstract and the introduction, so you will repeat some of the information from your abstract; just be sure to paraphrase and elaborate.
• Aims are broad, e.g.:
  – Overall, what did you hope to achieve from the site visits?
  – What is the main message you want to communicate to the reader?

• Objectives are more specific, e.g.:
  – To enhance your knowledge of the construction process?
  – To gather new construction knowledge?
  – To extend your learning beyond the classroom?
  – To link course knowledge to real world situations?
Body sections

• Use headings and subheadings to:
  – give your report structure
  – provide an outline for you to develop your ideas
  – allow the reader to progress logically through the material.

• See your assignment guidelines for the recommended structure
Body sections

**Figure 1**: Foundations at building site X (BBC 2013)

- Use images to support your descriptions of the site construction
- Number your images – Figure 1, Figure 2, etc
- Name each of your images
- Provide reference if this is NOT YOUR image
### Table 3 Base SI units

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Symbol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>length</td>
<td>metre</td>
<td>m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mass</td>
<td>kilogram</td>
<td>kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time</td>
<td>second</td>
<td>s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>electric current</td>
<td>ampere</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thermodynamic temperature</td>
<td>kelvin</td>
<td>K</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Rogers 2002, p. 178)

- If you use a table, also give it a number and name
- Provide reference if this is NOT YOUR table
Body sections

• Describe fully your observations at the different construction stages, e.g.:
  – What was the first step, the next step, etc.? 
  – What measurements were involved? 
  – What equipment or material was used? 
  – Why/how was it used? 
  – What regulations or codes applied? 
  – What are the connections between theory or principles and actual construction practices?

• Present your observations in a logical, sequential order
• Refer to the readings from your course work (and beyond)
Conclusions & Recommendations

Conclusions:
• Clear & concise summary
• Refer back to aim/objectives of the report

Recommendations:
• Emerge from conclusions
• Brief, persuasive statements
• You may relate these to your own learning and professional development
“We had a look at X building site and found...”

“The observation of X building site revealed...”

“After that, there were two to three workers ...”

“Following the boarding process, two to three workers ...”

- Use formal, objective language (e.g.: **NOT** ‘I’ or ‘we’)
- Use the past tense to describe processes that have occurred
- Use present tense to describe things which are ongoing
Why reference?

• To avoid plagiarism & maintain academic integrity
• Shows exactly where the information comes from
• Strengthens your argument or provides evidence to support your position
• Avoids plagiarism and maintains academic integrity
When to reference?

- **Paraphrasing** the words and ideas of others
- **Summarising** the words and ideas of others
- **Quoting** the words of others
- **Copying** the data, graphs and tables of others
- **Mentioning the ideas or work of others** (unless it is considered general knowledge)
Two components:

- *In-text* references which provide:
  - Author’s surname
  - Year of publication
  - Page number (when quoting, using data, graphs, tables and images from a specific page or pages)

- *Reference list* entries that provide full bibliographic details of texts
Appendices

Appendix B: Floor Plan

- Used for large pieces of information which are too big for the body of your report
- Each item is given a number or letter and a name
- Refer directly to the Appendix in the body of your report, e.g.:
  - “A detailed floor plan is provided in Appendix B.”
The writing process

Make sure ...

✓ you have followed the guidelines in your course outline re: word length, format, layout, presentation, referencing
✓ your writing style is appropriate: a formal style, using relatively short sentences
✓ you have connected your points logically, using linking words
✓ each paragraph contains one main idea
✓ your claims are supported by evidence
✓ your examples are relevant
✓ you have referenced appropriately
✓ your grammar, spelling & punctuation are correct
✓ tables, figures & diagrams are correctly & consistently labelled and referred to in body of report
✓ the table of contents is accurate
L3: Language, Literacies & Learning

- [www.unisa.edu.au/L3ITEE](http://www.unisa.edu.au/L3ITEE)
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