

Assessment 5: End of Placement Report

Before submitting your report on QMPlus, you need to ask your line manager or a company representative for clearance for workplace confidentiality.

1. The placement report should be maximum 2000 words in length, excluding items such as front page, acknowledgements, table of contents, bibliography and appendices (if included).
2. Reports that fall outside this word count limit will be penalised as follows:
 - For every 100 words or part thereof that an assignment is over the word limit, there would be deduction of five per cent of the total marks available (i.e. five marks for an assessment marked out of 100).
3. Your front page should state your word count excluding front page, acknowledgements, table of contents, bibliography and appendices (if included).
4. We encourage you to take this as an opportunity to practise writing a succinct report; this is a prized skill at workplace.

Report guidelines

1) Submission

You must submit your draft report to your line manager for clearance around workplace confidentiality. After your line manager has cleared your report for workplace confidentiality, you then submit your final report on QMPlus.

2) Word count and penalties for exceeding word limit

The placement report should be maximum 2000 words in length, excluding items such as front page, acknowledgements, table of contents, bibliography and appendices (if included).

Reports that fall outside this word count limit will be penalised as follows: For every 100 words or part thereof that an assignment is over the word limit, there would be deduction of five per cent of the total marks available (i.e. five marks for an assessment marked out of 100).

Your front page should state your word count excluding front page, acknowledgements, table of contents, bibliography and appendices (if included).

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3) Content

In the report, you should:

- Provide an introduction to the organisation including a description of the organisational structure and the nature of its business (services, products and clients) and its position in the relevant market sector. NB: Please ensure that any information (in text or non-textual form) included about the company, is properly referenced.
- Describe what the purpose of your role is and where it fits within your specific team and the organisation as a whole.
- Describe the main tasks/projects that you have been involved in, identifying where you have applied knowledge from your degree course to your work where appropriate. Knowledge from your course is not limited simply to hard technical skills such as programming languages or applications you have used. It can also include broader skill areas and approaches such as: problem solving; analysis; project methodologies; documentation; teamwork and time-management.
- Evaluate the main problems (these can be related to your technical or personal development) that you have encountered and how they were overcome.

Your front page should state your word count excluding front page, acknowledgements, table of contents, bibliography and appendices (if included).

We encourage you to take this as an opportunity to practise writing a succinct report; this is a prized skill at workplace.

You must submit your draft report to your line manager for clearance around workplace confidentiality.

After your line manager has cleared your report for workplace confidentiality, you then submit your final report on QMPlus.

Reflect upon and evaluate the skills/competencies (technical and other) you have developed or newly acquired during the placement.

Conclude the report by summing up your time in the organisation .

4) Basic Formatting for the report

A good report is precise and succinct, and reading it should be both interesting and informative. A clear, concise style of writing and well-presented diagrams and graphs all make for a successful reporting format.

Things to consider: (a) The author should plan and write the report with the reader's needs in mind. The author should consider who the report is for and what the reader knows about the subject. (It is usually best to assume that they know very little about what you have been doing). (b) The report should be structured and organised in a logical manner to aid the marker. (c) The writing style should be formal, fluent and concise. (d) Care should be taken with the preparation and positioning of non-textual material like tables and charts. (e) Before submission, a report should be thoroughly checked for accuracy, consistency, spelling and punctuation errors.

5) Appendices

An appendix (or appendices), should be used as a device for removing from the main text all information that is not essential to ensure its flow and understanding. Remember that conciseness is important; if the main text is not cluttered by detailed statistics, data tables, explanations of technical terms and the like, it will be as readable as the material allows.

6) Basic structure – sections and subsections

The main text will usually be comprised of sections rather than chapters. Section headings should be as concise and specific as possible. For this reason, each section should be clearly identifiable and its sub-sections easily recognised.

The report should include the following sections:

- Front page
- Acknowledgements
- Table of Contents
- Introduction
- Main body (this should include separate sections relating to the content requirements outlined in 3)
- Conclusion
- References/Bibliography
- Appendices (if included)

7) References

If reference is made to other sources of information this must be acknowledged, otherwise you may risk being accused of plagiarism. This includes information taken from an organisation's marketing and promotional materials and/or its website. In a technical report the Harvard system of referencing is commonly used. We are also happy for you to use other system of referencing, for example, APA

8) Writing the report

The style should be formal and the English clear and concise. 'Formal' means writing in full (e.g. "it is", rather than "it's"), avoiding slang and colloquialisms and using words correctly. Formal writing is more ordered and 'considered' than speech, but it does not have to be full of long words.

9) Checking

The first draft is likely to be flawed, and a significant amount of revision and re-writing will probably be required. This process can be time consuming. Even when the text is considered to be satisfactory, meticulous checking of detail will be necessary - spelling, grammar, punctuation, typing errors and so on.

10) Diagrams

Tables, graphs, charts, line drawings, or any other non-textual material form an essential part of many technical reports. There is much truth in the saying 'A picture is worth 10,000 words'! The guiding principle here can be remembered as the 'four Rs rule': The Right diagram with the Right labels should be in the Right place for the Reader.

The marker should not need to search for a diagram; it should be signposted clearly and in the right place. (a) Tables A table is the most common form of diagram in a technical report. Tables can provide a great deal of information and care should be taken to present them effectively. (b) Graphs and Charts Graphs and charts are used to illustrate trends, relationships between variables or to enable comparisons to be made. Computer graphics packages facilitate experimentation to determine, for a particular type of chart, the most appropriate format to use. Care should be taken with the positioning of labels, titles, legend detail and diagram reference numbers.

We recommend using a sensible method of numbering, for example, using the decimal system in which, as an illustration, Figure 2.3 would identify the 3rd diagram in section 2 of the report. References in the main text to diagrams should indicate, if necessary, the page number or appendix where the diagram is located.

11) Finishing the report (the final points to be added)

(a) The Contents page

Even in a short report, there should be a contents page. This should list the numbered sections of the report with corresponding page numbers.

(b) Appearance

The marker will form an initial impression of the report just by skimming through it. Spelling, punctuation and layout will be considered in the marking process. Aim for a professional presentation and avoid for example: Poor structure, pages in the wrong order (or even unnumbered), pages missing, narrow margins, too small or too large a font size, unusual font style, overcrowded pages, inappropriate line spacing.

The front page should contain: the title, author's name, student number, date, classification (e.g. confidential) if appropriate, degree title, word count excluding front page, table of contents, bibliography and appendices (if any).