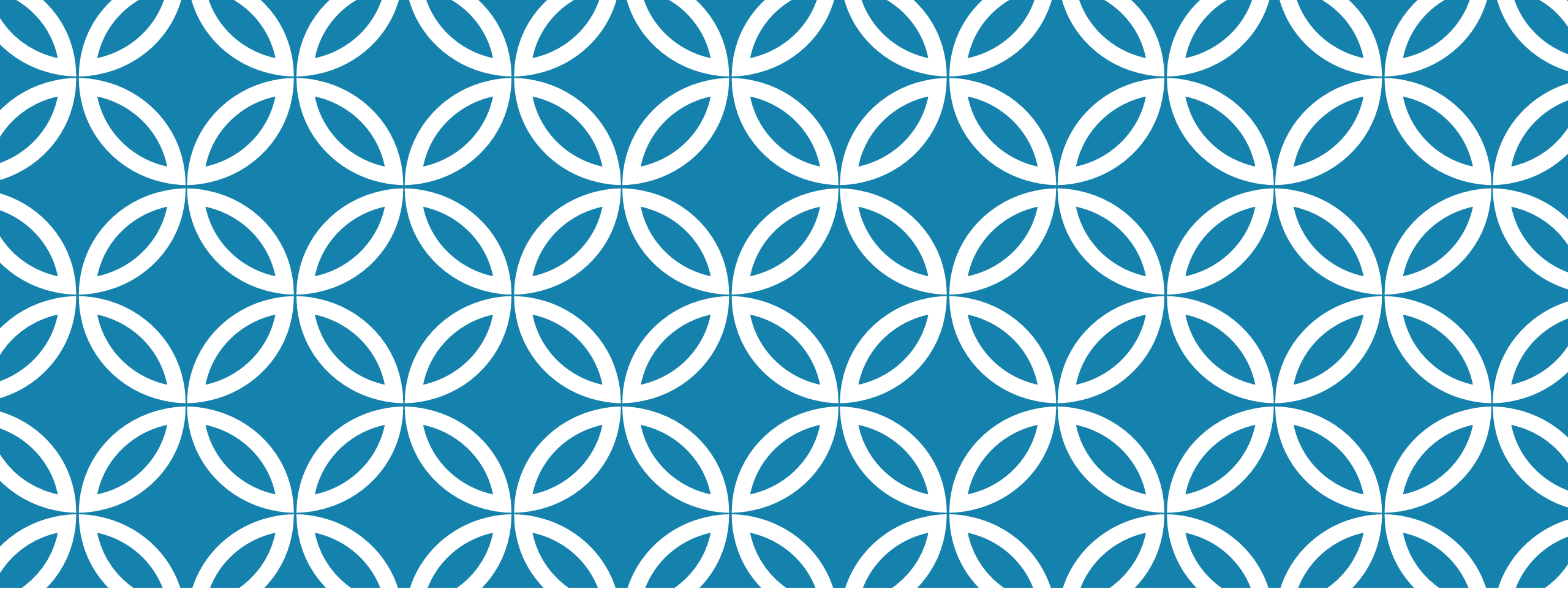




REPORT WRITING



WHAT IS A REPORT



- ❖ A report is written for a clear purpose and to a particular audience.
- ❖ Specific information and evidence are presented, analysed and applied to a particular problem or issue.
- ❖ The information is presented in a clearly structured format making use of sections and headings so that the information is easy to locate and follow.

REPORT WRITING

- ❖ For a report to be written a report brief would need to be given.
- ❖ The report brief will provide instructions and guidelines.
- ❖ The report brief may outline the following; purpose, audience and problem or issue that your report must address.
- ❖ At times the person requesting the report will also ask for specific requirements in relation to format or structure.

WHAT ARE REPORTS USED FOR?

Two of the reasons why reports are used as forms of written assessment are:

- ❖ To find out what you have learnt from your reading, research or experience;
- ❖ To give you experience of an important skill that is widely used in the work place.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD REPORT?

- ❖ An effective report presents and analyses facts and evidence that are relevant to the specific problem or issue of the report brief.
- ❖ All sources used should be acknowledged and referenced throughout
- ❖ The style of writing in a report is usually less discursive than in an essay, with a more direct and economic use of language.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD REPORT?

A well written report needs the writer to abide by the following:

- ❖ Understand the purpose of the report brief and adhere to its specifications;
- ❖ Gather, evaluate and analyse relevant information;
- ❖ Structure material in a logical and coherent order;
- ❖ Present your report in a consistent manner according to the instructions of the report brief;
- ❖ Make appropriate conclusions that are supported by the evidence and analysis of the report;
- ❖ Make thoughtful and practical recommendations where required.

THE LAYOUT OF A REPORT

A report is structured as following:

Title

A report must be followed with these headings:

Terms of Reference

Proceedings

Findings

Conclusions

Recommendations

Signature

Date



LAYOUT OF A REPORT : **TITLE**

The title should briefly but explicitly describe the purpose of the report

For Example:

Your employer has asked you to evaluate the responses received from customers through surveys in relation to customer satisfaction regarding the servicing of cars at his Garage.

Title of Report – **Evaluation of Responses to Customer Satisfaction Surveys**

The title should be centred and underlined

LAYOUT OF THE REPORT: HEADINGS

Terms of Reference

- ❖ This heading is the first one that must appear beneath the title.
- ❖ In the terms of reference the writer must specify exactly what is being asked in the report
- ❖ One could include a brief explanation of who will read the report (audience) why it was written (purpose) and how it was written (methods).
- ❖ It may be in the form of a single paragraph.

LAYOUT OF THE REPORT: HEADINGS

Terms of Reference

For Example:

Mr. Sherwood, Managing Director, has requested a report indicating customer satisfaction in relation to the servicing of cars over the last 3 months. Mr. Sherwood requests this report to be completed as soon as possible.

LAYOUT OF THE REPORT: HEADINGS

Proceedings

- ❖ Proceedings is the next step after Terms of Reference
- ❖ In this part of the reports the writer must indicate the action taken to be able to satisfy the brief/ request shown in the terms of reference.
- ❖ This section sets the scene for the main body of the report.
- ❖ The aims and objectives of the report should be explained.
- ❖ Any problems or limitations in the scope of the report should be identified, and a description of research methods, the parameters of the research and any necessary background history should be included.

LAYOUT OF THE REPORT: HEADINGS

Proceedings

For Example:

Of the 105 questionnaires sent out to customers, 78 were returned. The 78 questionnaires that were completed have been analysed for the purpose of the report. The questionnaire covers the 5 areas detailed below.

LAYOUT OF THE REPORT: HEADINGS

Findings

- ❖ In this section the writer must provide a summary of the results of his research and analysis, showing gathered data that support the results.
- ❖ The findings must be presented in a clear concise manner and must follow a logical order.
- ❖ Listing and Numbering the findings makes the report more readable and accessible.
- ❖ The language used need to be factual and neutral, therefore objective and without comments.
- ❖ It must indicate all the fields/areas looked at clearly and the result of each field.

LAYOUT OF THE REPORT: HEADINGS

Findings

Example:

1. The Car Service: Over one third (39%) were not happy with the service as there was no obvious improvement in their car performance. Just over half (51%) were satisfied with the service carried out
2. The Cost: Less than a quarter (23%) were happy with the cost of the service. 65% thought it was too high and complained about the labour charges. There were also questions as to whether replacement parts had been replaced or not
3.

LAYOUT OF THE REPORT: HEADINGS

Conclusions

- ❖ In this section the writer has to indicate the conclusions that have resulted from the findings
- ❖ In the conclusion you should show the overall significance of what has been covered.
- ❖ You may want to remind the reader of the most important points that have been made in the report or highlight what you consider to be the most central issues or findings.
- ❖ However, no new material should be introduced in the conclusion.

LAYOUT OF THE REPORT: HEADINGS

Conclusions

Example:

In general customers are not satisfied with the service being provided by our Garage and do not find the showroom friendly or attractive

LAYOUT OF THE REPORT: HEADINGS

Recommendations

In this section the writer needs to give some recommendations to his employer on how best to solve or tackle the issues presented in the report.

Example:

I recommend that we:

1. Plan and timetable services more efficiently and inform customers on how long their car service will take
2.

LAYOUT OF THE REPORT: HEADINGS

Ending the report

The report must end with the Signature of the author and the date in which the report was written.

Signature:

Date:

WRITING THE REPORT: THE ESSENTIAL STAGES

- ❖ All reports need to be clear, concise and well structured.
- ❖ The key to writing an effective report is to allocate time for planning and preparation.
- ❖ With careful planning, the writing of a report will be made much easier.
- ❖ Be sure to leave time for final proof reading and checking.

STAGE ONE: UNDERSTANDING THE REPORT BRIEF

- ❖ This first stage is the most important.
- ❖ You need to be confident that you understand the purpose of your report as described in your report brief or instructions.
- ❖ Consider who the report is for and why it is being written.
- ❖ Check that you understand all the instructions or requirements

STAGE TWO: GATHERING AND SELECTING INFORMATION

- ❖ Once you are clear about the purpose of your report, you need to begin to gather relevant information.
- ❖ Your information may come from a variety of sources, but how much information you will need will depend on how much detail is required in the report.
- ❖ You may want to begin by reading relevant literature to widen your understanding of the topic or issue before you go on to look at other forms of information such as questionnaires, surveys etc.
- ❖ As you read and gather information you need to assess its relevance to your report and select accordingly.
- ❖ Keep referring to your report brief to help you decide what is relevant information.

STAGE THREE: ORGANISING YOUR MATERIAL

- ❖ Once you have gathered information you need to decide what will be included and in what sequence it should be presented.
- ❖ Begin by grouping together points that are related.
- ❖ Choose an order for your material that is logical and easy to follow.

STAGE FOUR: ANALYSING YOUR MATERIAL

- ❖ Before you begin to write your report, take time to consider and make notes on the points you will make using the facts and evidence you have gathered.
- ❖ What conclusions can be drawn from the material?
- ❖ What are the limitations or flaws in the evidence?
- ❖ Do certain pieces of evidence conflict with one another?
- ❖ It is not enough to simply present the information you have gathered; you must relate it to the problem or issue described in the report brief.

STAGE FIVE: WRITING THE REPORT

- ❖ This stage is when you actually start to write the report
- ❖ Aim for a writing style that is direct and precise.
- ❖ make your points clearly and concisely.
- ❖ Follow the structure/layout indicated