

Section Eight

Guidelines for Writing Work Term Reports & Oral Presentation

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Guidelines for Writing Work Term Reports

IMPORTANCE OF THE WORK TERM REPORT

Writing a work term report and submitting it on time is a requirement of your Co-op work term.

- It provides an opportunity for you to practice and demonstrate your communication skills
- It prepares you for writing reports that is a major part of professional work
- It provides you with an example of your work to show to prospective employers

Reports submitted after the deadline without prior consultation with your Coordinator may result in an “F” grade for your Co-op work term. Contact your Coordinator for more details.

TOPIC

Preferably, your report should be based on your Co-op work term project. If your work term does not involve a specific project, you should research a topic which is related to your work or place of employment.

FORMAT

The report is expected to be analytical rather than descriptive. It should contain accurate, factual information together with sound arguments and conclusions. The format of the report should normally follow the guidelines provided in this workshop, but if it is to be used by your employer, you may use the company’s own internal guidelines. However, you must check with your faculty advisor to ensure that the company guidelines and topic are acceptable for a Work Term report.

EVALUATION

The report will be evaluated by your supervisor using the Employer Evaluation Form in SCOPE as a guide. The report receives an overall evaluation on a scale ranging from “Excellent” to “Unsatisfactory.”

Successful completion of your work term relies on the quality of your work term report and a satisfactory work term evaluation from your employer. A “P” will be entered on your transcript for the completed Co-op course. If you fail to obtain at least a “Satisfactory” evaluation for both your work term report and your work term evaluation, an “F” will be entered. If your report is marked “Unsatisfactory,” you will be given the opportunity to make revisions and resubmit it for re-marking.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

The length of your report should be 1,000 to 3,000 words, excluding appendices. The length should reflect the complexity of the topic and the thoroughness of the research.

The report should be self-contained (explain any terminology particular to the topic the first time you use it), consistent, and to the point. It should be understandable to someone who has background in the area of the report (e.g. computer science, electrical engineering, physics or microbiology) but is unfamiliar with the particular topic of the report.

- Use standard formal level of English (no slang or colloquialisms).
- Use the first person only in the letter of transmittal and in the preface.
- Use good quality white bond paper.
- Use only one side of the page for all text and figures.
- Start major sections of the report on new pages.
- Number the pages:
 - All pages that come before the body of the report are numbered using lower case Roman numerals. The title page is considered to be page i, but is not numbered.
 - The body of the report begins with the introduction. The pages of the body are given in Arabic numerals. The first page of the introduction is considered to be page 1, but it is not numbered.
 - The numbering in the appendices should be a continuation of that in the text.
- Leave margins of at least 1" on the top, bottom, and sides of each page.

REPORT FORMAT

The following shows the recommended pattern for the Co-op work term report:

1. Cover
2. Letter of transmittal
3. Title page
4. Preface or foreword (optional)
5. Summary
6. Table of contents
7. List of figures (optional)
8. List of tables (optional)
9. Body
 - I. Introduction
 - II. Methods and materials (if applicable)
 - III. Discussion

- IV. Conclusions
- V. Recommendations (optional)
- VI. References (optional)
- VII. Bibliography (optional)
- VIII. Appendices (optional)

DETAILED SECTION INFORMATION

The following information explains the purpose and suggested content of each of the work term report sections. Include only sections and content that are appropriate for your topic.

Cover

Purpose: Provides a binding for the report, identifies the topic and owner of the report.

Content:

- Title of the report
- Name of student
- Co-op course number
- Co-op employer
- Date report submitted

Letter of Transmittal

Purpose: A brief covering letter, addressed to the first official reader (usually your Coordinator).

Content:

- Name of manager and department for whom the report was prepared
- Terms of reference of the report
- Authorization, degree of confidentiality of report
- General comments on the nature of and the time involved in the investigation
- A comment on the quality of the recommendations
- Must be written in formal business letter style and signed in long-hand
- First person may be used

Title Page

Purpose: Identifies the topic and ownership of the report.

Content:

- Report title (clearly identifies the subject of the report)
- Name of the addressee or recipient, the University of British Columbia faculty and department
- Name of student, student ID
- Date, place
- Have a signature line for your Supervisor to sign and certify that the information is non-confidential and can be released to UBC (if report is confidential, no need to include this line)

Preface or Foreword

Purpose: Provides reader with background of writing the report.

Content:

- Purpose, background, scope of subject coverage
- Contributions of others to the report

Summary

The summary is considered by many to be the most important part of a report. It is a difficult part to write and should always be written last. It is often the only part that managers in the work place have time to read, so it is important to state your case succinctly (normally less than one page).

Purpose: Provides a brief summary of the report, an information abstract. No reference is made to any part of the report; a summary is complete in itself.

Content:

- States the more important information in the report
- Purpose, method, reason for the report
- Findings, conclusions, decisions, recommendations
- All major generalizations or assumptions of the report.

Table of Contents

Purpose: Identifies contents and organization of document.

Content:

- Section headings
- Page numbers

List of Figures

Purpose: Identifies any figures, drawings, or photographs shown in the report.

Content:

- Number of figures
- Title of figures
- Page numbers

List of Tables

Purpose: Identifies any tables shown in the report.

Content:

- Number of table
- Title of table
- Page number

Introduction

Purpose: Introduces the subject of the report to the reader. Remember that the reader may be from a different branch of the discipline, and will require some orientation to the subject of your report.

Content: Subject and purpose of the report: states briefly why the report is being written and what the report is intended to achieve.

- Scope: describes how broad or how limited the treatment of the subject will be
- Plan of development: outlines which areas will be covered
- Thesis of the report: the general conclusion and/or the general recommendation.

Methods and Materials (if applicable)

Purpose: To provide a detailed account of the procedure that was followed in completing the experiment(s) discussed in the report.

Content:

- Include enough detail so the reader would have the necessary information required to “reproduce” the experiments outlined in the project.
- Do not simply provide a list of methods and experimental techniques, the section should be in complete sentence format and materials/equipment are discussed throughout the procedure as they are used.

Discussion

Purpose: Presents evidence (facts, arguments, details, data, test results, etc.) necessary to the purpose of the report.

Content: This section contains the main part of the report. All evidence must be developed in an organized, logical and orderly manner. All information must be relevant. This section should contain pertinent figures, tables, footnotes, and references to material in appendices. Any additional supporting information should be placed in an appendix but referenced in the discussion.

Conclusions

Purpose: States briefly the major inferences that can be drawn from the discussion.

Content:

- Must be based on information presented in the discussion
- Each conclusion should be presented as a separate paragraph, with paragraphs numbered in sequence for easy reference
- Never suggest or recommend future action

Recommendations

Purpose: Suggests a course of action based on the findings and conclusions.

Content:

- Must follow logically from the conclusions
- Must be supported both by the conclusions and by the data in the discussion

References

Purpose: Acknowledge use of material from printed sources in the preparation of your report. Indicate exact source of all quotations and/or results of previous work.

Content:

- Author's name, title of book, year published, publisher's name, city, ISBN number, page number
- Bibliographic entries are listed alphabetically by the name of the author or by the first major work of the title

Example: Vetterli, C. "Work term report Guidelines", Co-op Journal, Vol. 1 No. 1, August 1992.

Note: Common knowledge does not require a reference, e.g. the speed of light, the atomic weight of some element. However, if a new value for a commonly accepted quantity is cited, the source should be referenced.

Bibliography

Purpose: Makes reference to any books, journals or other sources that you consulted but did not cite in the body of your Work Term Report.

Content:

- Author's name, title of book, year published, publisher's name, city, ISBN number
- Bibliographic entries are listed alphabetically by the name of the author or by the first major work of the title

Example: Vetterli, C. "Work term report Guidelines", *Co-op Journal*, Vol. 1 No. 1, August 1992.

Appendices

Purpose: Include data that is not necessary to an immediate understanding of the discussion.

Content: Appendices can contain program listings, drawings, technical specifications, or other detailed explanations of some aspects of your report

REFERENCE MATERIAL

Every writer requires:

- a grammar handbook
- a good dictionary: Oxford is recommended

Recommended grammar handbooks:

- Milward & Flick, *Handbook for Writers*, Harcourt Brace, 2nd Edition, 1993.
- Prentice-Hall, *Handbook for Writers*, 1st Edition, 1996.
- Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style*, Collier Macmillan.

CO-OP PRESENTATION GUIDELINES

Importance of Presentations

Delivering a presentation is one assignment option for your Co-op work term. You will:

- Develop your public speaking skills
- Learn to become an effective communicator
- Gain confidence presenting to an audience

Your presentation should be presented to your team or department prior to the end of the work term. The topic should be technical and related to your project or work term.

Format Guidelines

A presentation should be structured similar to a technical report. Your presentation should be:

- 10 - 30 minutes (will vary) in length
- Delivered using Microsoft PowerPoint or a similar tool
- Inclusive of images, equations, figures and/or charts

The presentation should include an introduction, a body and a conclusion. Analysis of a problem and synthesis of knowledge should be demonstrated. An effective presentation will include:

SLIDE BREAKDOWN	CONTENT
TITLE SLIDE	a descriptive title, your name, the company or organization, and the presentation date
OUTLINE SLIDE	an agenda of what will be presented
TECHNICAL SLIDES	the key points of your presentation
SUMMARY & CONCLUSION SLIDES	a recap of the key points, recommendations and thoughts
QUESTION SLIDE	lets the audience know it is their turn to talk/ ask questions

GRADING BREAKDOWN

A Co-op Presentation Evaluation form is graded out of 100 and can be downloaded at <http://www.sciencecoop.ubc.ca/sites/default/files/PresentationEvaluation2016.pdf>

TECHNICAL CONTENT - 40

Suitability of topic

Knowledge of topic

Analytical content

Thorough research

Ability to engage audience

STRUCTURE - 30

Clear introduction, body and conclusion

Appropriate structure/format

Clear and logical flow

DELIVERY - 20

Speak clearly and concisely

Maintain eye contact

Use of professional language

Well-rehearsed and delivered

VISUAL AIDS - 10

Appropriate tables/figures

Adequate number of slides

References cited appropriately

Accurate spelling/grammar

Grading

Excellent – 85-100

Good – 71-84

Satisfactory – 60-70

Unsatisfactory 0-59

Resources: Toastmasters – www.toastmasters.org