

## REPORT WRITING - USEFUL WORDS

### LONG REPORTS

#### **Front matter**

**title page**-This should indicate briefly but clearly what the whole report is about.  
Some of the most common types of report are: Monthly Progress Report, Financial Report, Final Report.

**abstract**-A short piece of writing that summarizes the main points of a report. It is a “snapshot” of a report, most useful for readers deciding whether to read the work in full based on its subject matter and purpose.

**table of contents**-This is a list of the different parts of a report. In a short report this is usually on the title page.

**list of figures**-A list of drawings or diagrams used to explain or illustrate information that is being given.

**list of tables**-A list of information given in the form of a table.

**foreword**-The foreword of a report is an introduction written by someone other than the author of the report.

**preface**-An introduction at the beginning of the report that explains why the report was written.

**list of abbreviations**-This a list of short forms of words or phrases that are used in the report made by leaving out some of the letters or by using only the first letters of each word.

#### **Body**

**executive summary**- An executive summary may be the only section of a longer work read by many readers so it must cover the information in more detail than in an abstract. Recommendations and conclusions are important part of the executive summary.

**Introduction**- Depending on the nature of the report different titles will be given to this section. It may be appropriate to call this section “background” to give an explanation of how the report came to be written or just call it “introduction”.

**text (including headings)**- This is the report itself and could include heading such as procedure, findings and any other headings requested by your organisation.

conclusions-This section offers an interpretation of the facts or circumstances. This usually suggests a cause for them, or makes clear why the events occurred in the way they did. It is important that this interpretation is based only on the information given earlier in the report, otherwise the logical progression will be broken and the reader will have the impression that something has been concealed.

recommendations-This is the final major section of a report used to put forward a future course of action concerning the topic under investigation. It should be as specific as possible given the information available. Aspects of the topic that are satisfactory should also be mentioned. Recommendations must rest on the information in the findings and the reasoning in the conclusions so that the reader can see that the report proceeds clearly and logically.

references-References are materials, papers, documents, interviews which you have used to get information for the report.

### **Back Matter**

bibliography-A list of books used in the preparation of the report.

appendices-Appendices (singular: appendix) are used to list detailed information which complements the facts you state in the main body of the report. The information could consist of further details of the phenomena you report on. Or it could be evidence to back up conclusions you reach. The reason such information is placed at the end of the report is to ensure a separation between your statements and the details you use to support them or to supplement them.

glossary-A glossary is an alphabetical list of words or expressions and the special or technical meanings that they have in the report.

index-An alphabetical list printed at the back of a report or book to tell you where particular subjects, people, places, events etc. can be found.

terms of reference-The terms of reference are the scope of the report, the parameters within which the author of the report will investigate. It should include the exact subject of the report, any matters specifically excluded from the report, and details of how the report was commissioned and by whom.