Preparing Assignments and Avoiding Plagiarism

Institute of Transport and Logistics Studies 2015

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Introduction

› Expect a wide range of assessment styles
› How to prepare an assignment
› ITLS guide: “How to write a report, essay or thesis at the Institute of Transport and Logistics Studies”
› Structure and content
  - Cover page
  - Synopsis/executive summary
  - Introduction
  - Body
  - Conclusion
  - References
  - Appendices
› Formatting
› Common errors
Plagiarism
- ITLS guide in Appendix 2 of “How to write a report…”
- Degrees of plagiarism
- Turnitin
- Consequences of plagiarising
How to Prepare an Assignment

› An ITLS guide, “How to write a report…”
  - Available at “Student Resources”, within the “Transport & Logistics Graduate Program” page

› The guide can be used as a template for all of your written reports
If submitting via Turnitin, create a cover page containing:
- Student Identification (SID)
- Unit of Study name and code
- Assignment number and/or name
- Semester and year of submission

If not submitting via Turnitin, use the cover page template provided at: http://sydney.edu.au/business/currentstudents/forms

Place your SID, and the SIDs of any other group member, in the header of the document
The synopsis allows the reader to gauge quickly what is offered within the report, including:

- **Theme** – what is the report about?
- **Techniques used**
- **Main conclusions and/or recommendations**

The synopsis serves a different purpose to the introduction.
A straightforward directory of the content of the report
Accuracy in page references is important
Accuracy in headings is important
Not typically used for an essay
Step 1 (Introduction):

Tell them what you are going to tell them.

Step 2 (Body):

Tell them.

Step 3 (Conclusion):

Tell them what you told them.
› Your opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge of, and effectively communicate:
   - The purpose of the report
   - The problem or problems that are being addressed
   - Any relevant background material
   - The objectives of the report

› Outline the structure of the report

› Keep it brief, make it count

› Not the same as the synopsis or executive summary
Core of the paper

The structure may be dictated to you by the unit of study coordinator, or you may need to decide for yourself.

Choose a logical structure and flow. Why?
- Ease of reading
- Persuasion

Each (sub)section should address a specific aspect of the report
- Does the heading match the content of the section?
- Refer to “How to write a report…” for formatting details

It is ideal to have each section build upon the previous sections.

An excellent paper will reach strong conclusions based upon the cumulative effects of the information presented in each section.
› May be linked to the suggested structure
› Available from Blackboard or the Unit of Study outline
› Should be provided to the student for all assignments
› Useful for allocating time, and space within the report (or exam)
Conclusion

› Explicitly discuss:
  - What you found
  - How you found it
  - Why what you found is important
  - What else you and others could find in future work

› Do not introduce new material

› Do not cut and paste from earlier sections of the report
Cite all sources
- E.g. “Turabian (1973) suggests that structure is crucial to...”

Quotes
- Keep to a minimum
- Use your own words

After the conclusion, provide a reference list containing each source cited in the paper
  - Not a bibliography

Follow the formatting style in “How to write a report…”

When in doubt, consult Harvard referencing system guides online
Appendices are used to present important information that would detract from the flow in the body of the paper.

- Data sets: Full? Partial? Meta-data?
- Model structures, formulas, etc
- Graphical information

Appendices must be referenced within the text to complement the discussion: they are not a dumping ground!
Refer to “How to write a report…” for detailed information

Be consistent through the report

Group reports provide an additional challenge for consistency

Always provide a title for tables and figures

Use the spell checker

“How to write a report” contains some useful points on spelling, grammar, and punctuation
Common Errors

› Unreferenced appendices
› Raising points that are not addressed
› Stating conclusions that are not justified
› Poor logical structure
› Trying to accomplish too much within the limits of the assignment
› Going off on tangents ("Nice-to-know" versus "Need-to-know")
› Omitting citations in the text
› Omitting references
› Listing “ghost” references
› Poor spelling
Avoiding Plagiarism

 › Presenting another person’s ideas, findings, or written work as one’s own
 › Plagiarism is a serious crime and a serious problem at universities
 › Intentional plagiarism is both theft of intellectual property and fraud within your degree program
 › See Appendix 2, “How to write a report…”
Degrees of Plagiarism

› Intentional plagiarism

› Unintentional or negligent plagiarism
  - Lack of quotation when needed
  - Lack of reference
  - Lazy paraphrasing
Consequences of Plagiarism

› You may be given a Fail grade for the unit of study
› You may be removed from the program
› It is **extremely likely** that you will be caught if you plagiarise
The measurement of service quality continues to be a challenging research theme and one of great practical importance to service providers and regulatory agencies. The key challenges begin with the identification of the set of potentially important dimensions of service quality perceived by passengers, current and potential. We then have to establish a way of measuring each attribute and identifying their relative importance in the overall calculation of satisfaction associated with existing service levels. Once a set of relevant attributes has been identified, this information can be integrated into programs such as monitoring and benchmarking, and even in contract specification. This paper, building on earlier research by the authors, investigates ways of quantifying service quality and comparing the levels within and between bus operators. The importance of establishing suitable market segments and the need to scale the service quality index for each operator to make meaningful comparisons is highlighted.
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Understanding service quality levels is important for organizations given that it is the service levels, which directly affect consumers of the goods and services of these organizations. Nevertheless, many organizations have great difficulty in measuring the levels of service that they offer. A good starting point for many firms is to begin by identifying the appropriate set of attributes related to the organizations services on offer that should be measured.
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› Read and use the resources available to you
  - “How to write a report…”
› How you structure, write and present a report is crucial
› Be aware of the seriousness of plagiarism