

WORK TERM REPORT COMMON ERROR CHECKLIST

Adapted from Andrews and Ratz, *Introduction to Professional Engineering*, 5th ed. 1996

Any sections below that are marked with an 'X' have been taken into consideration when grading your work term report. Although this list does not address the analytical content or engineering judgement required for work term reports, avoiding these common errors should help to improve the presentation and communication of your engineering reports in the future.

GENERAL (for more information, see <http://mecheng1.uwaterloo.ca/students/workreport.html>)

- title should be short, yet descriptive (i.e., the summary's summary)
- revise awkward phrases and long sentences. Avoid the use of conversational language
- proofread for correct grammar, spelling and word choice (e.g., affect vs. effect)
- use the active voice, rather than the passive voice. Write in the present tense.
- avoid unnecessary description – use figures/charts/tables whenever possible

SUMMARY

- summary should represent the full report in miniature – include quantified SPECIFICS
- briefly outline the purpose, methods, results, conclusions and recommendations
- avoid definitions of acronyms (these should be in the introduction)

INTRODUCTION

- state and explain the purpose of the report - define the goals and scope of the report
- introduction should begin on page 1 (number preceding pages with roman numerals)

CONCLUSIONS

- conclusions should be repeated from the analysis and discussion sections
- should not be assumed to be obvious to the reader
- should not introduce new ideas not discussed in the report

FIGURES AND TABLES

- all figures and tables must be referred to *by number* at least once in the main text
- should be placed in the first convenient location following the first reference to it
- large or sequences of figures and tables should be placed in an appendix
- landscaped figures should be readable from the right
- figure and table captions should be numbered and appropriately attached to the image

REFERENCES

- reference all thoughts, figures, equations, etc., that are not your own
- all references must be cited at least once in the report
- number and list references in the same order as first cited in the report
- format as [1], or [4-6] etc. Do not use footnotes, or place partial references in the text
- if absolutely necessary, include references for email and personal communication

WEB REFERENCES

- use an accepted web format:
see <http://web.library.emory.edu/services/ressvcs/citation/plagiarismpart4.html> .
- cite the author and date of publication (or state 'no date')
- indicate the source type, such as [online], [web page] or [newsgroup], following the title
- state where the URL is available and the date the website was accessed

original RCR 05/01
revised: DCW 1/4/06