

Department of Business Communication

HA - engelsk

GUIDE TO REPORT WRITING

Doing Business in English-speaking Markets

**Aarhus University
School of Business and Social Sciences
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1. Purpose

The report is an independent assignment in the 4th semester. The purpose is to test the students' abilities with respect to

- writing a problem-oriented project paper at an academic level (cf. the chapter 'Writing the Report'), including formulating a precise problem statement
- gathering information about a problem pertaining to the UK/US or other English-speaking markets and systematically processing the information
- evaluating and discussing the problem.

2. Choice of Topic

The subject must be chosen among the topics dealt with in Doing Business in English-Speaking Markets. The subject needs the teacher's approval on 19 April 2013 at the latest.

3. Source Material

The report is written on the basis of material (and references in that material) used during the course and/or material retrieved by the student from libraries, the Internet, etc.

The ASB Library will assist students in the information retrieval process.

4. Writing the Report

4.1 Length of the Report

The report may be written individually or by groups of up to 4 students. For administrative reasons, group reports must not be across classes. In group reports, the contribution of each individual member of the group must be clearly specified. The report must be written in English and should have a length of 10 pages of 2,200 characters excluding blanks for each student and excluding Table of Contents, Bibliography and Appendices. The report must be written with a line spacing of 1.5 and with a left margin of 3.5 cm.

4.2 Title Page

The Title Page must include the information shown in the appendix.

4.3 Table of Contents

On the first page after the Title Page – and not included in the page numbering – the report must include a Table of Contents giving an overview of the structuring of the report into sections and subsections according to the decimal system and with page references.

4.4 Introduction

The Introduction must include:

- the problem statement
- description and argumentation for choice of sources
- presentation of the structure of the report.

The problem statement must include an argued delimitation of the subject and a precise formulation of the problem. The problem statement can be formulated as a question or one or more hypotheses.

4.5 The Problem-oriented Part

The problem-oriented part of the report must include an investigation of the question(s) and/or hypotheses of the problem statement. The problem-oriented part includes:

- a presentation and an analysis of the information from the source material gathered, which is regarded as essential in relation to the problem statement of the report
- an evaluation and possibly a comparison of the items of information selected from the source material
- a discussion with a view to formulating an answer to the question of the problem statement or an affirmation or invalidation of the hypotheses of the problem statement.

The problem-oriented part must be a systematic account, in which the student – in his/her own words – describes the most important facts and circumstances found in the source material.

With respect to structure of the problem-oriented part, there is a choice between two criteria:

- a subject-related structure
- a chronological structure

The account of the selected items of information must be loyal and as neutral as possible, both with respect to the selection of items of information and with respect to the way in which they are described.

When referring to the source material, it must be clear that the writer is referring – with formulations such as: “X starts by saying/writing that ...”, “X later claims that ...”, “The introduction to the article says that ...”.

4.6 Conclusion

The conclusion must answer the question of the problem statement or (totally or partly) affirm or invalidate the hypotheses of the problem statement.

4.7 Bibliography

At the end of the report, a Bibliography must be included. This Bibliography lists all sources in alphabetical order. The sources referred to are primary literature. Other sources are secondary literature. The source material must be primarily in English.

References to monographs include name of author, year of publication, full title in italics, place of printing and name of publishers.

Example:

Campbell, Neil & Alasdair Kean (1997). *American Cultural Studies: An Introduction to American Culture*. New York: Routledge.

References to articles in anthologies include name of author, year of publication, title of article in quotes, name(s) of editor(s) of the anthology, title of the anthology in italics, page reference in parentheses, place of printing and name of publishers.

Example:

Will, Donald S. (1994). "United States Policy in the Middle East". In John Davies & Frederic A. Waldstein (eds.), *Political Issues in America Today: The 1990s Revisited* (pp. 230-245). Manchester: Manchester University Press.

References to articles in journals include name of author, year of publication, title of article in quotes, title of journal in italics, volume and/or issue of the journal and page reference.

Example:

Naudin, Thierry (2001). "New Labour's Foreign Policy: A New Moral Crusade?". *The Political Quarterly*, vol. 72, issue 4, pp. 513-515.

References to articles with name of author in newspapers/magazines include name of author, year of publication, title of article in quotes, name of newspaper/magazine in quotes, date of publication and page reference.

Example:

Elliot, Larry (2001). "Brown Dampens Euro Hopes". *The Guardian*, November 5, p. B7.

References to articles without name of author in newspapers/magazines include name of newspaper/magazine, year of publication, title of article in quotes, date of publication and page reference.

Example:

The Economist (2001). "Slipstream Diplomacy", November 24, p. 31.

References to Internet-based sources are treated like other references, but include also date and URL-address.

Example:

The New York Times (2002). Unemployment Rate Climbs to 5.8 Percent, January 4.
<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/business/AP-Economy.html>

If there is more than one reference to sources by the same author of the same year of publication, this is indicated by letters following the year of publication.

Example:

Pilkington, Colin (1999a). *The Civil Service in Britain Today*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Pilkington, Colin (1999b). *The British Constitution*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

4.8 References and Footnotes

References to source material are used in connection with:

- quotations
- important passages and information which are not quotations
- illustrations, tables, etc.
- reference of viewpoints.

References to source material are incorporated into the text with name of author, year of publication and (if possible) page reference.

Example:

(Lynggaard 1993: 20)

If there are references to more than one title by the same author from the same year of publication, this is indicated by letters following the year of publication.

Example

(Lynggaard 1998a: 20) and (Lynggaard 1998b: 34).

References to source material without name of author include name of newspaper/magazine, year of publication and page reference.

Example:

(Jyllands-Posten 1999:3)

‘Argumentative’ footnotes are used to give information or evaluations which are too irrelevant to be included in the text. Examples include elaborating remarks, etc.

4.9 Appendices

Appendices are included where it is deemed necessary, for example for the purpose of substantiating an argument. It must be possible to read the report without referring to the appendices.

5. Submission and Evaluation

The report must be submitted in three copies. For more information on where and when to submit the report, check the exam schedule at

<http://studerende.au.dk/studier/fagportaler/businessadm/undervisning-og-eksamen/eksamen/eksamensplaner/eksamensplaner-bachelor/>

The oral examination based on the report is conducted in English. The oral examination is an individual examination lasting approx. 30 minutes, including performance evaluation. No time for preparation is allowed. The report and the oral examination are assessed by an internal and external examiner. One mark according to the Danish marking system is given. The mark is based on a weighting of 50% for the report and 50% for the oral examination.

5.1 Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation comprises an assessment of both the written report and the oral examination.

The evaluation of the written report is based on the following points:

- that the problem statement gives a precise indication of the purpose of the report, of how the problem has been limited, and which questions or hypotheses are included in the problem statement
- that there is a clear structure in the report which leads systematically to the conclusion
- that the source material gathered is relevant and sheds sufficient light on the problem statement
- that the student is capable of evaluating the source material, that is, of distinguishing between facts, comments in the sources and his/her own evaluation
- that the student masters academic writing with particular reference to report writing
- that the student has a level of English proficiency corresponding to the 4th semester, with respect to orthographic rules, basic grammatical rules, syntactic correctness and genre-specific stylistic requirements.

In evaluating the oral examination, emphasis is put on a logical and cohesive account in the presentation of the report, and a balanced and substantiated defence of the report, using varied and idiomatically correct English with correct grammar.

APPENDIX

HA - engelsk**Student: [name]****Doing Business in English-speaking Markets****Supervisor: [name]****[Title of Report]****Aarhus University****School of Business and Social Sciences****English Section****[Date of submission]**