



# Draft Essay/Report Plan

## Title page

Should include title, subtitle (if there is one), date, author's name and affiliation.

## Abstract

The abstract should actually be written last as it should reflect what has been written in the report. Whether the abstract is in the form of an Executive Summary or a detailed scientific abstract, it is critical to your reader. This is because it will be read first and will therefore determine if the reader decides to read the main body of the report. Therefore, it is essential to summarize what has been done in terms of objectives, results and conclusions.

- Reflect the requirements of the original brief.
- Be quantitative, record key data from the results and range of the key parameters studied.
- Give the main conclusion and its relevance.

Time for reading is often limited so it is desirable to grab the reader's attention and make the right impact. So be precise, concise, relevant and complete.

## Acknowledgements

This section is optional.

## Contents list

Table of contents with page numbers.

## Introduction

Introduce the general subject area and its significance and show how the topic in the title fits in. Refer to terms of reference and explain the overall objective.

## Literature review

Clarify why the current work was needed, contrast and compare any important and related studies critically. Key details such as different analytical methods, differences in the raw materials used, agreements in findings, etc should be referred to.

## Materials and Methods

This should list and specify all the materials used (use chemical nomenclature correctly). It is essential to report exactly what was done (as opposed to what should have been done) and be accurate. In the writing of scientific papers, there should be enough detail for someone elsewhere in the world to read and repeat exactly what was done. This section should always be written in the third person and the past tense. A key element to the approach of studying foods is the use of statistics.



The application of statistics to the study of foods is important because foods are biological materials which are inherently variable. Report here on the experimental design used, for example to reduce the number of experiments needed. Analyse the results using statistics in order to be certain what differences are real rather than just due to biological variation, or due to errors in sampling and experimentation. It is essential to draw out the certainty of the meaning of your results and employ appropriate controls to ensure validity of your data and subsequent conclusions.

### **Results**

This section may include a variety of diagrams, tables, graphs and photographs and it is important to ensure that each one has the correct title, correct and clear labels for the parts or graph axes and the correct units. Always check that the numbering of the tables and graphs has been done precisely and accurately. Do not present both a table and a graph of the same data.

### **Discussion**

Remember to discuss all your results in the discussion – they do not speak for themselves. Be quantitative during this discussion. State the relevance of each result to, for example, related research or some aspect of food manufacturing. Discuss the effectiveness of your approach; to what extent did you achieve the objective. Simplify, justify and quantify the results in this section.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

This is the most important part. Here it is important to make the final deductions and summaries of the findings, to draw the inferences from the results. Draw all the related aspects together. Finally, make suggestions for further work and any relevant recommendations that are appropriate.

### **Bibliography and References**

Citations or references should be used when necessary to acknowledge the ideas of others, or to criticize or build your own argument. Sometimes references are included at the bottom of the page; however in scientific writing it is normal to present references at the end of the article or report.



Here are two examples of how to write the full reference:

a) from books: Author (surname followed by initials); year of publication (in brackets); title of book (italics or underlined); edition of book (if not the first); publisher; place of publication; Volume number (if applicable); page number(s); section (if applicable)

b) from journals: Author(s)\* (surname followed by initials); year of publication (in brackets); title or article; name of journal (italics or underlined); Volume number (in bold or underlined); part number (if applicable); page number(s); and date.

\*if there are more than two authors, the citation is written as the first author followed by *et al.*

Using the Harvard system, references should be listed in strict chronological order. With the numeric system, a bracketed number is used in the text to refer to the corresponding reference at the end of the report.

When referring to web based sources (other than academic texts that are hosted online) the citation in the text should be by Author and year. The bibliography should also quote the article title followed by the URL, followed by the data visited.

### **Glossary**

Explain any terms you think will be unfamiliar to your audience.

### **Appendices**

These are usually reserved for additional and supporting information so the report itself should be complete without any Appendices.