

Types of Reports: Completion Reports, Feasibility Studies, and Scientific Reports

As you've read in chapters 7 and 8, reports exist to solve a variety of problems. Of the types of reports described in these chapters, completion reports, scientific reports, and feasibility studies are those most relevant to the term project in our class.

Completion Reports

As its name implies, a completion report is written when a research project has come to an end. The objectives, plan of work, and other items laid out in the proposal have been completed, and the final task is to write up the results of the project. Since most research is done at the request of an organization or individual authorizing the work, the completion report responds to an implicit or explicit request for information. It explains how the plan of work was carried out and what conclusions and recommendations can be drawn from the project.

Your report can address either an academic or a nonacademic audience. See chapter 7 for specifics about addressing a nonacademic audience.

Among the parts customarily included in a completion report designed for an academic audience are the following. **Parts listed in parentheses need not be included in your report for this class.**

General Audience (p. 228)	Academic Audience (p. 259)
Separate from the document	Separate from the document
Letter of transmittal	Letter of transmittal
(Cover)	(Cover)
Title Page. See p. 238 for one example	Title Page. See p. 259 for one example
(Acknowledgments)	(Acknowledgments)
Complete document	Complete document
Executive Summary	Abstract
Table of Contents	Table of Contents
Introduction: Purpose, Scope or Limitations, and Background	Introduction: Purpose, Scope or Limitations, and Background
Analysis and Discussion	Analysis and Discussion <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review of Literature 2. Methods and Materials 3. Results 4. Discussion: Interpretation of Data
Conclusions	Summary and Conclusion
Recommendations	--
Works Cited	Works Cited
Appendixes (optional, depending on your topic)	Appendixes (optional, depending on your topic)

Scientific Reports

Scientific reports vary enough by discipline that you should become familiar with specific examples in your field, although general guidelines for reports will hold true. See p. 311.

Feasibility Reports (see p. 289)

Feasibility reports differ somewhat from completion reports in that they may lead more directly to action through their Recommendations section. These reports typically investigate the preliminary aspects of a project in order to determine whether further study is warranted. The structure will often resemble that of a completion report, although forecasting the recommendations in the introduction and executive summary is important.

Because feasibility studies examine evidence, reach conclusions, and make recommendations, they should consider all likely outcomes relevant to the project. Distinguishing between the discussion, conclusions, and recommendations sections is important.

- The **discussion and analysis section** considers the data in terms of all the reasonable variables being used in the evaluation; for example, if your task is to report on the feasibility of building a 5,000 square foot retail building on a site and you are looking at price, geographic location, availability of public utilities, and land-use restrictions for one site, all sites must be considered on the same dimensions.
- The **conclusions section** must be based on the data analyzed in the report. If you find that another factor external to those originally designated would be likely to influence the conclusions you reach, you need to rewrite the earlier parts of the report and reanalyze the data to include it. If the report has done its work well, by the conclusions section the reader will have reached approximately the same conclusions as the report.
- The **recommendations section** should be based on the conclusions section, and it should provide a clear sense of which alternatives are superior.