Reports are not only a part of university life, but are commonly used in most workplaces too.

Reports help us to gather and analyse information, and present it concisely to a specific audience.

Reports are often used to examine an issue and make suggestions for improvement.

The English word **Report** comes from two Latin words:

- ‘Portare’ meaning *to carry*
- And ‘Re’ meaning *back or again.*

Accordingly, the **Report** is a way of carrying back information to somebody who needs it.

Reports are different to essays in many ways, the main difference being the structure.

While essays are read linearly from beginning to end, reports can be broken down into independent sections that can be read as stand-alone pieces. These sections contain headings and sub-headings to help the reader navigate the document.

You should note that although this may be the case in the workplace, your tutor will read the entire document in order to provide you with feedback.

**Reports:**

- Present information
- Can be scanned quickly and often out of order
- Contain short, concise paragraphs, and possibly dot points
- Make recommendations.

**Essays:**

- Present an argument
- Should be read carefully and continuously
- Have cohesive paragraphs
- And rarely make recommendations.
To prepare a report, you first need to:

- Research information and literature surrounding the topic: statistics, interviews, news articles, journals, biographies and so on
- Analyse and interpret the information you find
- Organise your interpretation of the topic into key findings and observations
- Recommend actions to address your findings and their implications.

Make sure you check your unit outline and the assignment marking guide so you know what is expected in the report.