Formalities for written assignments applying to programmes in economics and business administration

This paper contains the current guidelines concerning the contents and layout of written assignments and reports handed in by students at the programmes in Economics and Business Administration and the programmes in Economics and Mathematics-Economics. The guidelines only apply if there are no separate rules in the course description or the assignment given for the course in question.

Contents

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How to hand in assignments

All assignments must be handed in digitally on the given date at the given time. Assignments must be handed in via Digital Exam.

The file format must be pdf. Appendices may be in another format if this is relevant and allowed according to the course description.

Groups are only allowed to hand in one digital copy of the assignment.

If you by mistake hand in a wrong copy, you can upload another copy. The copy uploaded the last will be graded.

In case you are not able to hand in by the deadline due to problems connected to Digital Exam, you must hand in your assignment by email to Studiekontakten (Odense) or Studieservice at your campus.

Documentation and use of own material or material produced by others

It is important that all statements and results in the report are corroborated either by references to other research from for example peer review journals or by data gathered by you.

References must be clear. Quotations (reproduction of text from other authors) must be clearly marked as such in the text – for example by use of quotation marks. Use of such text produced by others without indication that this is the case is regarded as plagiarism which is a form of exam cheating. Exam cheating and other irregularities at exams will be reported to the vice-chancellor, who is the authority deciding what sanctions will be made. Citations should typically be quite limited, as they are not independent work.

Also use of material from own, formerly handed in assignments or reports without clear reference to this work is regarded as plagiarism. This entails that if you use material, typically in the form of text or data, that you have previously handed in for an exam, you must give this a proper reference to the work handed in before. If you reuse text directly, you must put the text in citation marks and give a reference. If the work is difficult to assess, you may put it – or relevant parts of it – as an appendix or an extra file.

Individualization of group assignments

In some courses, the examination is taken as a group. many cases. If the report is graded based solely on written material, it is required that the contents of the report is individualized. This may also be the case if there is an oral examination attached to the report. Reports are individualized by a clear declaration of which of the sections each author is responsible for. This declaration can be placed in the foreword or in the table of contents. Notice that the division must be meaningful as individual grading is done based on the division. According to the examination order, individual grading must always take place. Therefore, no grade can be given if this is not possible.

Usually, it is allowed that more than one author is responsible for a few sections, typically introduction and conclusion. For these sections, the relevant authors are listed. Notice that it is only the sections in the body of the report that must be individualized.

On which elements is the assessment made?

The assessment is made based on the contents of the report. This means that the assessment is based on the body of the report. The reader should be able to understand the meaning of the report without preface, appendices etc. However, notice that list of references and appendices contain documentation behind the contents of the report and that title page, table of contents etc. influence the overall impression. Therefore, the quality of these elements indirectly is part of the basis for the assessment.

Margins, line spacing, standard page etc.

Margins (minimum):		**Other:**	
Left:	2 cm.	Line spacing:	1.5 pkt.
Right:	2 cm.	Font:	Calibri is recommended
Top:	3 cm.	Font size:	Corresponding 11 pt. Calibri.
Bottom:	3 cm.	One standard page:	2400 keystrokes (incl. blanks) as counted by word or similar software. Figures and tables count as the number of key strokes they occupy.

Number of pages

Number of pages is calculated as the number of standard pages occupied by the body of the report. This entail that preface, abstract, table of contents, list of references and appendices do not count in the calculation of the number of pages.

The elements of the report

In addition to the content itself, reports must contain a cover page, a sworn statement, and a list of references. In addition, longer reports should contain a table of contents. Finally, in some cases it is relevant to add a preface, and there may be appendices. The order of the components of a report should be as shown in the text box to the right.

The pages should always be filled to the bottom. Only new elements, e.g. a new chapter, in the report should start at the top of a new page.

Title page
Preface (optional)
Sworn statement
Abstract
Table of contents
The body of the report
List of references
Appendices

The title page

The title page should resemble the exemplary title page shown to the right and MUST include the displayed information.

University of Southern Denmark, Campus
The Faculty of Business and Social Sciences

date dd.mm.yyyy
Number of keystrokes: xxxx

Title of report/assignment
Course title

The report is prepared by:
Anders Andersen
Date of birth, programme, semester

Børge Bentsen
Date of birth, programme, semester

Vejleder(-e):
Erna Eriksen
Department of xxxx

At the top, state the name of the university, city, faculty, as well as the hand in date for the report. In addition, you must provide the number of keystrokes in the report as defined in the course description.

The title of the report should be put at the middle of the title page along with the name of the course. The title can be predetermined from the assignment given by the teacher/university. If the title is not predetermined, you should produce a title covering the contents of the report.

At the bottom of the page, the authors should be listed in alphabetical order by surname. If two authors have the same surname, the first name determines the order of the two.

Under each name, the birthdate must be written along with the study programme and if relevant, the semester in which the report is handed in. For a person who studies economics and business administration on the 2nd semester, for example, it will look like this:

Anders Andersen
31121985, Economics and Business Administration, 2nd semester

Notice that when the name of the authors is given on the front page, you should NOT state the examination number.

The name of supervisor(s) or examiner should be written at the bottom to the right. The supervisors are indicated by name and department. In case of more than one supervisor, put the principal supervisor first followed by co-supervisors.

Sworn statement

The page following the title page must contain a sworn statement of the following wording:

> ” I hereby solemnly declare that I have personally and independently prepared this paper. All quotations in the text have been marked as such, and the paper or considerable parts of it have not previously been subject to any examination or assessment.”

Followed by the names of the authors.

Page and section numbers

Sections are numbered consecutively. All topics with equal importance should have the same level of heading. There should not be more than three levels of headings. The numbering can be as shown below:

1. Heading
1.1. Subheading
1.1.1 Subsubheading

Pages are numbered from the first page in the report. This means that pages before the table of contents and page displaying the table of contents are not numbered. The numbering starts on the first page in the introduction. This page gets the number "1", then "2" and so forth.

Page numbers should be inserted to the right at the bottom of each page.

Table of contents

The list of contents should include all sections in the report except sections placed before the list of contents. This means that preface, abstract, and sworn statement should not appear in the table of contents. Further, the table of contents heading should not appear in the table of contents. Below, you can see an example of a list of contents.

Contents

Figures and tables

Figures and tables are welcome in the text as they can help the reader understand or get an overview of the text. This is especially the case if there are many numbers in the text or if the text explains about causal or other relationships.

All figures and tables must be assigned a number and a title. In addition, a reference should be given indicating the source of the numbers used or a figure along with the table or figure. If you have produced a figure yourself, it is often preferable to indicate "own work" as source. By this, there will be no confusion about the source.

Appendixes and list of appendixes

Appendixes are inserted after the list of references.

Appendixes must be numbered consecutively independently of the numbering of the sections in the report. Each appendix must be independently pagenumbered.

Appendices should not be listed in the list of contents. Instead, they appear in the list of appendices which is placed at the beginning of the appendices. Each appendix starts at the top of a page.

List of references

The list of references is inserted at the end of the text. All references used as documentation in the report must appear on one, single list. *Do not split the list into different types of sources such as books, internet and so on.* Own work used in the report must also appear in the list of references. The list starts at the top of a page.

The list should be made according to a reference system. We recommend using computer reference software as for example Endnote. How to use Endnote is often a part of the curriculum. In addition, courses are available at the library.

Examples of well-known reference systems are American Psychological Association (APA) 5th ed., Harvard, Chicago, and Vancouver. In Word, there are facilities for using APA and Chicago. When for instance using the APA standard, in-text references are given as (author, year) and the list of references (bibliography) is alphabetically sorted based on the name of the author. In the list of references, author, title, city of publication and publisher must appear. If the reference is an article in an academic journal, the name, volume and issue number of the journal must also appear in the list of references. If there is more than one reference from the same year by the same author, these are sorted alphabetically according to the title and the year is supplemented by a), b) and so on.

For books, the title should be in italics. For articles from journals, the journal title should be in italics. Please note that if the reference is a chapter in a book with several authors, the author of the chapter must appear as author along with the title of the chapter and the title of the book and the name(s) of the editor(s) appears after this. The title of the book must be written in italics.

Materials downloaded from the internet must be referenced to and appear in the list of references in the same way as other references. In addition to this, the date on which the material was downloaded should also be given and the url (the internet-address). If the url is very long, consider whether it is possible to find the source with just the start of the url and the title of the material.

Sometimes, references, especially on the internet, do not state who the author is. If this is the case, it may be necessary to just insert the organization behind as author. If this information is also not available, the source may not be a good source. If it is necessary to use the source anyway, then state as much information about the source as possible.

Example of a list of references based on APA

American Psychological Association (2010). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6. ed.). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

Bureau van Dijk (2016). *Summerbird A/S* [Accounting information]. Retrieved from Orbis: https://orbis4-bvdinfo-com.proxy1-bib.sdu.dk/version-2018115/orbis/1/Companies/report/Index?format=_standard&BookSection=ACCOUNTINGINFORMATION

Danmarks Statistik (n.d.). *Forbrugsundersøgelsen* [Hovedtal]. Retrieved from http://www.dst.dk/da/Statistik/emner/priser-og-forbrug/forbrug/forbrugsundersoegelsen

Danmarks Statistik (n.d.). *Husstandenes årlige forbrug efter forbrugsart, hustandsgrupper og prisenhed* (Tabel FU51). Retrieved from http://www.statistikbanken.dk/FU51

Euromonitor International (2016). *Consumer lifestyles in Norway* [Report]. Retrieved from Passport: http://www.portal.euromonitor.com.proxy1-bib.sdu.dk:2048/portal/analysis/tab

Hansen, P. (2018, May 17). Maersk: Sejler det eller det sejler? [Blog post]. Retrieved from https://perspektiv.blogs.business.dk/2018/05/17/maersk-sejler-det-eller-det-sejler/
Jepsen, A. L. (2007). Factors affecting consumer use of the Internet for information search. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, *21*(3), 21-34. doi:10.1002/dir.20083
Jepsen, A. L., & Madsen, S. O. (2006). Om at foretage kvalitative interviews. In S. Voxted (Ed.), *Valg der skaber viden - om samfundsvidenskabelige metoder*. (pp. 184-196). København: Academica.
LEGO Group (2017). *The LEGO Group Annual report 2016*. Retrieved from https://www.lego.com/da-dk/aboutus/lego-group/annual-report
MarketLine (2017). *Scandinavia Confectionery* [Industry profile]. Retrieved from http://advantage.marketline.com.proxy1-bib.sdu.dk:2048/Product?ptype=Industries&pid=MLIP2403-0018
Olesen, L. (2015, March 30). Regnskab er sød læsning. *Fyens Stiftstidende.* Retrieved from https://www.fyens.dk/assens/Regnskab-er-soed-laesning/artikel/2686567
SMVdanmark. (2017, November 24). Brian Mikkelsen: SMV'erne er rygraden i dansk erhvervsliv [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o8Bl74m4Zsc
Soerensen, J. G., Waehrens, S. S., & Byrne, D. V. (2015). Predicting and Understanding Long-Term Consumer Liking of Standard Versus Novel Chocolate: A Repeated Exposure Study. *Journal of Sensory Studies, 30*(5), 370-380.
Summerbird (n.d.). Begyndelsen. Retrieved from https://summerbird.dk/specialiteter/begyndelsen
VH Revision Registrerede Revisorer ApS (2016). *Summerbird A/S* [Regnskabsoplysninger]. Retrieved from Bisnode Marketprofile: http://abon.greens.dk.proxy1-bib.sdu.dk:2048/Online/CompanyDetail.aspx?Id=162780110&i=1
VH Revision Registrerede Revisorer ApS (2017). *Summerbird årsrapport 2016*. Retrieved from Bisnode Marketprofile: http://regnskab.bbi.dk/regnskab.asp?id=162780110&d=2017-05-31&f=1372464810
Warncke, B. (2014, April 22). Summerbird åbner i Norge. *Fyens Stiftstidende,* p. 10.
Zalewski, B. (2004). *Toms' historie*. København: Gerda & Victor B. Strands Fond.

How to make in-text references:

a) A general reference at the beginning of a section if the section is a description of for example a theory and the description is mainly based on one ore a few sources, or

b) In the text like this: bla bla (Jensen, 2008) bla bla (Olsen, 2007; Petersen 2005a).

c) If the reference is to a book or is an exact citation, a page number should be given. Like this: "It is customary to….." (Olsen, 2007:25). If the reference is to a journal article, page numbers are not necessary in the text.

d) References to the internet should be as precise as possible and state author and date. If the reference is to an internet site in general the site is given in the text and not in the list of references. For example www.sdu.dk.

Example of the structure of a written report with empirical work

The bullet points show topics that should be covered. These will normally not have section headings. The headings in a report should tell something about the contents of the section. This is particularly the case for "theoretical background".

Cover Page
Preface if relevant and sworn statement
Abstract if required
Table of contents

1. Introduction
    - Relevance of the problem
    - Description of the problem
    - Analysis of the possible perspectives on/solutions to the problem
    - Problem statement and research questions/hypotheses
    - Preconditions for carrying out the study and delimitations
    - Clarification of use of concepts/important definitions,
    - Choice of theoretical framework if relevant
    - Choice of general methodology (survey, experiment, case study etc.)
    - Structure of the report

2. Theoretical background
    - Description and analysis of relevant theory and empirical findings from the literature
    - If relevant secondary data as background information
    - Often results in a detailed need for information

3. Method
    - How the need for information will be/was covered
    - Research design (wh-words)

4. Results – possibly in several sections
    - Description, validation and cleaning of the data from the study
    - Section(s) with results from the analysis/analyses
    - Summing up of the results from the analysis sections

5. Discussion
    - Of method (How certain are our results? Where do we know of shortcomings?)
    - Of the results (What have we learnt? Are the results as expected? How do they differ? Do we have explanations for that?)

6. Conclusion
    - What can we, based on the results from the study and the discussion conclude regarding the research questions?
    - What is the answer to the problem statement?
    - Putting the results into perspective – possible generalizations? Possible implications for business and for future research.
    - Did we find new issues that we had not foreseen?

List of references
Appendices

Example of the structure of a written report containing a literature review

The bullet points show topics that should be covered. These will normally not have section headings. The headings in a report should tell something about the contents of the section. This is particularly the case for "theoretical background".

Cover Page
Preface if relevant and sworn statement
Abstract if required
Table of contents

- Introduction
    - Relevance of the problem
    - Description of the problem
    - Analysis of the possible perspectives on/solutions to the problem
    - Problem statement and research questions/hypotheses
    - Preconditions for carrying out the study and delimitations
    - Clarification of use of concepts/important definitions,
    - Choice of theoretical framework if relevant
    - Choice of general methodology (survey, experiment, case study etc.)
    - Structure of the report

- Method
    - Need for information
    - Sources of information
        - Which search method is to be used
        - Which databases
        - Criteria for inclusion or exclusion of studies
        - Screening procedure
    - Method of analysis of the literature, studies or findings

- Theoretical background
    - Description and analysis of relevant theory and empirical findings from the literature
    - If relevant secondary data as background information
    - Often results in a detailed need for information

- Results – possibly in several sections
    - Description, validation and screening of the studies/sources found
    - Section(s) with results from the analysis/analyses
    - Summing up of the results from the analysis sections

- Discussion
    - Of method (How certain are our results? Where do we know of shortcomings?)
    - Of the results (What have we learnt? Are the results as expected? How do they differ? Do we have explanations for that?)

- Conclusion
    - What can we, based on the results from the study and the discussion conclude regarding the research questions?
    - What is the answer to the problem statement?
    - Putting the results into perspective – possible generalizations? Possible implications for business and for future research.
    - Did we find new issues that we had not foreseen?

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