# How do I Structure a Report by Nikki Woods [Video Transcript]

A report is to write and provide an account of facts, findings and results. This video offers tips on how to structure a report.

Identify the **purpose** of the report at the beginning – this will help you to be more selective when researching and collecting your information.

**Planning a timeline** can help with the research, collecting of, organising and structuring, drafting, editing and presenting of the report. This stage identifies any key areas which need developing and improving.

The **methodology** will depend on the type of report to be written. A good starting point is your lecture notes. Further questions to be considered are what information will I need; where can I find this information; what are the best research tools to use; how shall I collect this information and how much information do I need.

**Organise and structure the content** in a logical and clear format which is easy to follow and understand. To support this, choose a **style of presentation** which is professional, simple and clear. It may help to use a sequence of (numbered) headings and subheadings, which will act as ‘signposts’ to help the reader to find and follow the information.

The structure of the report may contain these sections in this order:

1. The **Title page** is the title of the report with a clear indication of the subject matter.
2. **Acknowledgements** – acknowledge the people who have helped you complete the report. For example, it may be your lecturer or librarian.
3. In the **Contents** you will list all the main sections with appropriate page numbers. This does not include the title and contents pages.
4. The **Abstract or Summary** is a very short section giving an accurate overview of the main contents and scope of the report, the methods used, the conclusions reached and any recommendations made.
5. The **Introduction** is not a summary. This provides the context for the report, in particular, background detail of the topic under investigation, outline of the method of enquiry and indicate the proposed development.
6. The **Method** section details the methodology and methods used.
7. The **Results** section is a structured statement of all the data found. Use paragraphs to cover the relevant points together with tables, graphs or diagrams.
8. In the **Discussion** you use critical analysis to interpret your results, providing explanations, rationales and the significance of your critique.
9. The **Conclusion** is the place where you repeat the outcome of your analysis and the reasons which helped you reach this outcome. In this section you will also **recommend** what needs to be done as a result of this work.
10. In the **References** section follow the appropriate referencing style.
11. The **Appendix** section contains only supporting information which the reader can make reference to, if required. For example, a copy of a questionnaire or statistical data.

To summarise, pick out the relevant sections and use the checklist above as a guide how to write its content and you should have the beginnings of a good report.

Thank you.