

Lord Rootes Memorial Fund

Constructing a Report: Summary Guidance

As a condition of funding, all award holders must produce a written report of their project, which meets the standards set out in the Report Writing Guidelines, available at <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/insite/topic/teachinglearning/rootes/report/>. Award holders should read the full Guidelines and may also find the following summary guidance a useful source of reference.

The construction of the Lord Rootes Memorial Fund report, as with any piece of academic material, requires careful **PLANNING**, **STRUCTURE** and **CLARITY**. Due to the differing nature of projects undertaken by LRMF recipients, it is impossible to be totally prescriptive about what should and should not be included. However, there are certain elements that should always be considered. Advice pertinent to specific types of project is available at the end of this document.

The main purpose of the report is to communicate your project experiences to the reader. The report should be clear and carefully planned and structured, with a beginning, middle and end. Spelling and grammar are important. The report should also be interesting to the reader, who will want to read about your experiences and personal reflections, and your adventures/stories! Including photographs within the report can help to communicate your project experiences.

A) INTRODUCTORY SECTIONS

Do not overlook the importance of the first few pages of a report, as they inform the reader's first impressions of the project as a whole.

1. Title page

A title page should contain the title of the report, the name of author and the purpose of the report (i.e. 'Prepared for the LRMF Trustees as partial fulfillment of conditions of a LRMF award'). The date of submission and author contact details are often also included.

Remember: The title should be an indication of the nature of the project, but should also be concise and interesting to a potential reader.

2. Table of contents

The table of contents lists chapter and section with corresponding page numbers.

3. Table of illustrations

An overview of illustrations, images or appendices within the report and corresponding page numbers.

Remember: Reference should be made in the contents and introduction to any additional/ supporting parts of the report not included in the written report (e.g. DVD, website, folder with receipts)

4. Synopsis (also called an abstract/executive summary)

A very brief overview of what is contained in the report (main aims and conclusions).

5. Acknowledgements

You may wish to acknowledge, for example, those that made the project possible or supported you in carrying out your project, or those directly involved with the project, such as interviewees, contacts or lecturers (see also the Data Protection information in section B2).

B) BODY OF THE WORK

Remember: The report should clearly display a beginning, middle and end.

This is the section where the evidence is presented. It may be helpful to incorporate subdivisions to maintain a clear structure, which may include:

1. Introduction

Is there any historical background that may help to contextualize the project? What were your inspirations for conducting the project? You should include the main aims and objectives of the project, as set out in the original proposal and explain the purpose of each section of the report

Remember: Without objectives or scope being defined, a project, and its report, is unlikely to remain focused on the issues it purports to be presenting. Remember to answer the questions and acknowledge the objectives developed in your project proposal, even if they have changed.

2. Methodology

What did your project involve? What methods were used for gathering information/carrying out your project and why? Why were these methods preferred over others? You need not give a chronological account if this does not suit the material.

Remember: If as part of your project you are collecting personal information (names, email addresses etc) you should include a data protection statement in any forms/questionnaires and you should process the gathered information under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998. Unless you have prior written consent from an individual, personal information must not be included in your report. Further details can be found in Appendix 1.

3. Limitations

Did you encounter any unexpected obstacles? How did you overcome them? Could these have been avoided in any way? How did the limitations affect your results/outcomes?

4. Analysis

What can be learnt from your project? No one answer is correct. We all have different opinions and stances on situations – support your claim with reasoning.

Remember: All conclusions must be supported.

5. Personal reflection

Aim to be as reflective as possible. The Trustees will be particularly interested in what you have gained from carrying out the project, particularly in terms of your personal development.

6. Summary

By now you will have demonstrated many of your conclusions. However, it is necessary to highlight the main conclusions that you believe are most pertinent. Do not let the reader surmise. What are the most important features of the project? What did you actually achieve through the project? You should also include any dissemination activities you have/intend to carry out (e.g. talks, exhibitions, websites etc).

Remember: Aim to be as objective as possible, recognising your biases.

7. Recommendations

What can be taken away from your project? Would you give any advice to future participants? Do you have any advice to the LRMF Committee considering an application of this sort again? What would you do differently given the funding again, or what areas would you pursue in subsequent projects?

You may feel more comfortable writing in full essay style rather than a report style, and this may even suit the material better. However, this does not negate the need for a *structure* (even novels have chapter titles and follow the basic rules of grammar and syntax).

C) ADDITIONAL SECTIONS

1. Accounting statement

The report must include an accounting statement that explains how the award was spent. The statement should show the estimated project costs, as set out in the financial plan in the original application, and a breakdown of the actual project costs.

You may also wish to include relevant supporting material that may not be pivotal to the bulk of the text, but may add depth to the reading. *All appendices must be referred within the main text.* They may include:

2. Copy of the film

3. Script

4. **Questionnaires** - this may enlighten the reader as to the questions used when conducting your research.

5. **Correspondence** - ensure appended correspondence contributes to your evidence or enlightens the reader as to access restrictions or permissions.

6. **Statistics** - depending on the nature of the project, statistical tables may support the claims that are being made throughout the body of the work. This is helpful when the table is too bulky to be included within the main text, or it is not highly referenced in the report, although it may be sufficient to simply include a biography and reference.

Remember: Statistics, correspondence and academic/journal articles can be appended, but only if they advance a point referred to in your text. Always refer to appendices at the relevant place in the report and never append information which you have not analysed.

7. Glossary of terms

If the report incorporates a lot of technical language that would not be understood by the lay individual, a glossary of terms would be helpful

8. Bibliography (or References)

List of materials used, helpful for the reader if they wish to extend the research. A list of references is required for any text which you have quoted or used specific ideas, to prevent plagiarism. There are several formats adopted in academia; just remember to be *consistent*.

Referencing Examples

A popular referencing system for books:

Author(s), Authors capacity (e.g. editor – if appropriate), Year of publication, Book title, Publishers, Publishers location

Sheptycki, J. (ed.) (1999) 'Issues in Transnational Policing', Sage: London

A popular referencing system for articles:

Author(s), Authors capacity (e.g. editor – if appropriate), Chapter title (usually in inverted commas), Periodical or Journal title (usually highlighted as per book title), Volume and Issue number, date of publication, Pages (beginning and end of article)

Adler, P., 'Child Homicide', in 'British Journal of Criminology' Vol. 32: 3 (Summer 1997) pp. 245- 307

A popular Referencing system for websites:

Author (or aliases), Title of webpage (or file name), web address (URL), date and time site was accessed

Evans, M. 'Anomie Theory', <http://www.criminology.fsu.edu/crimtheory/merton.htm>, (12 March 2004, 13:18)

Crime Concern, 'A Brief History', <http://www.crimeconcern.org.uk/index1.asp> (16 March 2004, 10:17)

ADDITIONAL NOTES

- Always read, spell and grammar check your report prior to submission. Spell checking alone is insufficient, as it can fail to highlight words that are spelt correctly, but not appropriate to the context (e.g. 'their was a spectacular storm on the first day of the trip'; 'their' in this context should obviously be 'there').
- There is no correct style or method for constructing a report, but all reports must communicate their intent as clearly as possible. This document and the full Guidelines may offer some guidance, but should be adopted to fit your project and personal style.
- If you write up your project on a website, a full print out must be submitted in hard copy and should follow the guidance in this document and in the full Guidelines. Alternatively, you may wish to write a separate report and append appropriate pages from your website.
- Personal development is an important aspect of the LRMF; do not forget to highlight how you personally (and as a group, if applicable) have benefited from the project.
- Do not hesitate to seek guidance on your report prior to submission, either from your referees or a member of the Lord Rootes Memorial Fund Committee. Remember, 20% of your funding is contingent upon production of a satisfactory report.
- More detailed information on writing a report is available at:
<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/insite/topic/teachinglearning/rootes/report/>

D) PROJECT-SPECIFIC GUIDANCE

Do not assume that because a report is in the archive at the Modern Records Centre that it is a model to be followed. Past experience of the Committee has produced the following guidance for a few specific types of projects; these tips may also be relevant to other projects:

Theatre, Film and Performance Art

- Do not forget that the Trustees have funded a complete project – performance/ film production and report. Do not underestimate the importance of a satisfactory report, even if the performance is successful!
- If using a journal to record the project, ensure you have input from all members of the group.
- A performance project may not end at the last show – be sure to record any work done in the aftermath and feedback.

Photographic/Artistic Study

- Make sure you reference all of your photos (e.g. give them a title, possibly numbers).
- Do not separate them from the body of your work. Although a picture may say 1000 words, it cannot say why you chose to include it, or provide the reader with context.
- If creating a large piece of art, include studies, sketches and sources of inspiration.

Physical Challenges

- A journal needs to record more than what you did each day; there should be evidence of personal development in response to challenges, things you would do differently next time, people you met and how you were affected by the journey.
- Tell stories! These are interesting to the reader, and make your experience unique.

APPENDIX

1. Data Protection

Personal data should be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA) 1998.

If you are collecting any personal information you need to obtain consent by having an appropriate Data Protection statement in place. This should outline how you will use the data and the individual providing the data should sign to indicate their agreement. A failure to do so can open up the University to legal breach.

****Unless prior written or electronic consent is given you must not include within any part of the report or appendices any references that could identify an individual****

For further advice and guidance on the Data Protection Act 1998, including how to create a Data Protection Statement, please contact the University's Legal Compliance Officer (infocompliance@warwick.ac.uk).

Further details can be found on the University's Legal Compliance website at: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/gov/legalservices>.