



Project Reports – Frequently Asked Questions

Please make sure to discuss the content and structure of your report with your supervisor!!!

- 1. Should references be included as footnotes or is a bibliography at the end of the project sufficient?**

There is no hard-and-fast rule on how to include references in your project report. Either style would be fine but most reports include a bibliography at the end.

- 2. Will references be included in the page count, and should they also be double spaced?**

The references are not included in the 30-page limit (title page, table of content, references and acknowledgements do not count towards the page limit). References do not need to be double-spaced.

- 3. Is there a particular referencing style that should be used?**

The references should be coherent and adhere to the style of an internationally accepted chemistry journal. We usually recommend the RSC style (see Chem. Commun.), the ACS style (see Journal of the American Chemical Society) or the Wiley style (see Angewandte Chemie Int. Ed.). However, we have no real preference so long as you use one consistently.

- 4. Can particularly relevant spectra etc. be included in an appendix at the end of the report, outside the core 30-page limit?**

It is fine to include important data including spectra in an appendix and this is often helpful when marking reports. However, the appendices should not be too excessive. It should only contain things that aren't necessary for the understanding of the report, but may be of useful reference for the examiner, e.g. spectra, crystallographic tables etc. They should not be used to extend the report and may or may not be looked at by the examiners.

- 5. I was wondering if you want all of our spectra submitted along with our lab books, or just the more relevant ones?**

All spectra etc. should be submitted in a folder along with your report (in case the examiners want to have a look). It is good scientific practice.



- 6. If doing a project abroad, should the draft copy of the project be submitted to the supervisor abroad or to somebody in Trinity?**

You should submit a draft copy to the person who supervised your project, wherever you did it. This is to ensure that your supervisor has an input and can give you some guidance on writing the report. It is fairly informal but in previous years we had cases where students had no guidance from their supervisor and we wanted to avoid this.

- 7. I was wondering with regard to experimental notebook, say for example you are (like me) doing a synthesis which has many steps. However, halfway through something goes wrong and you must go back to the start again, should I hand up all experimental work even the failed experiments or just the procedures for when the product was formed successfully? Which spectra do I present in my report?**

If you are synthesising complex molecules it might be advisable to include some spectra in the report and include the interpretation in the discussion. It depends on the nature of the project. For routine syntheses (literature preparations) it might be best to quote the spectra (incl. assignments) in the experimental section after the experimental procedure. In addition you could include spectra in an appendix. Chemists have a tendency to report only successful experiments. However, it can be very informative when unsuccessful experiments and attempts are discussed. Often you get very important information from these unsuccessful attempts and they also demonstrate that you were hard-working. How detailed or whether you report unsuccessful results might also depend on how many results you have. Sometimes the page limit prevents students from discussing everything.

- 8. Are experimental notebooks and spectra counted as part of the 30 page limit?**

No, your experimental notebooks and spectra do not count to the 30-page limit. You should hand in your notebook to the School Office in case a reviewer wants to have a look at it.

- 9. Which way should the project be bound?**

We do not specify the type of binding but most students give us a simple plastic comb-bound or wire-bound report (with a transparent cover page).