# Academic Formats

**EEI2310 Academic Writing For Teachers of English**

## The Structure of Academic Report

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# Report

A formal document that presents information, findings, analysis, or recommendations about a specific subject or topic

# Title Page

- Title of the Report
- Author's Name and Affiliation
- Date of Submission

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# Executive Summary

- A brief overview of the report's key points
  - Purpose
  - Findings
  - Conclusion
  - Recommendations

## Executive summary (or Summary or Abstract )

The aim of this report was to investigate university teaching staff attitudes to the use of mobile phones by students in tutorials.[1] A survey of teaching staff from each college was conducted in first semester of the academic year.[2] Overall, the results indicate that the majority of staff found student mobile devices use a major disruption in tutorials.[3] The report concludes that the predominant view of staff is that mobile phones are disruptive and should be turned off during tutorials.[4] It is recommended that the university develops guidelines which would support staff in the restriction of student use of mobile phones in tutorials except in exceptional circumstances.[5]

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 Purpose | |
| 2 Method | |
| 3 Results | |
| 4 Conclusions | |
| 5 Recommendations | |

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# **Introduction**

- Context/Background of the Report
- Objectives or Purposes
- Scope and Limitations

## Introduction

There has been a great increase in the use of personal mobile phones over the past five years with every indication that this usage will continue to increase. Indeed, widespread use of mobile devices in educational contexts for non educational purposes has been reported as distracting and disruptive to learning environments. Recently a number of university teaching staff have proposed that an institution wide policy be developed regarding student mobile phone use during tutorials and lectures.[2] This report will discuss research into staff attitudes to the issue of student mobile phone usage in the teaching and learning environment.[1]

1 Purpose

2 Context

Source: https://learninglab.rmit.edu.au/assessments/reports/example-report/

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# **Methodology**

- Description of Research Methods/Approach
- Data Collection and Analysis Techniques
- Tools or Instruments Used

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## Method

The research used a quantitative methodology based on the approach advocated by Williams (2009).[1] This study was conducted by questionnaire and investigated university teaching staff attitudes to the use of mobile phones in tutorials (see Appendix 1).[2] The questionnaire used Likert scales to assess social attitudes (Jones 2007) to student mobile phone use and provided open ended responses for additional comments.[1] The survey was voluntary and anonymous. A total of 412 questionnaires were distributed online to randomly selected staff from each of the three colleges within the university. The completed questionnaires were returned by email.[2]

1 Refer to relevant reading/literature

2 Describe how the research was done

Source: https://learninglab.rmit.edu.au/assessments/reports/example-report/

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# Findings

- Presentation of Research Findings
- Charts, Graphs, Tables (if applicable)

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There was an 85% response rate to the distribution of questionnaires to staff. The results clearly show that student mobile phones are considered by teaching staff to be disruptive (see Table 1). As a result, most staff would prefer that mobile phones were turned off in tutorials.

| Mobile phone use in tutorials | Agree % | Disagree % | Strongly disagree % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Not a problem | 13 | 65 | 23 |
| 2. Sometimes a problem | 67 | 18 | 15 |
| 3. Often a problem | 50 | 27 | 23 |
| 4. Phones should be allowed | 22 | 56 | 22 |
| 5. Phones should be turned off | 70 | 18 | 12 |
| 6. Phones should be allowed in some circumstances | 47 | 39 | 14 |

Table 1: Distribution of results

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# Discussion

- Interpretation of Findings
- Significance and Implications
- Limitations and Potential Biases

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## Discussion

It is evident from the results in Table 1 that student mobile phone use in tutorials is considered to be a significant problem; however it was acknowledged that in some cases it should be permissible. Given that such high numbers of teaching staff (85 %) consider that student mobile phone usage in tutorials is a problem, clearly this is a teaching issue that needs to be addressed.[1] Further, while the findings acknowledge a place for mobile phones in exceptional circumstances (62%) it would appear that a policy is required to make explicit acceptable guidelines for their usage.[2] These findings are consistent with a number of other studies. According to Smith (2009) many educational institutions have identified mobile phones as disruptive to learning.Watts(2010) also claims that up to 30% of tutorial time is wasted through unnecessary phone interruptions. Other similar research shows ….[3]

1 Discuss and interpret the meaning of the results

2 Integrate different findings to create meaning

3 Link results to other research

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# Conclusion

- Summary of Key Findings
- Recommendations for Action

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## Conclusion

The student use of mobile phones in tutorials is clearly intrusive to teaching staff and detrimental to learning environments in general. The study highlights the concerns of teaching staff with regard to mobile phone usage. The fact that the majority of staff views the student use of mobile phones in tutorials as disruptive suggests appropriate guidelines and policies need to be developed.

# **Recommendations**

- Presenting the action you recommend be taken, drawing from the conclusion.
- These actions should be concrete and specific.

## Recommendations

It is recommended that the university develops official guidelines regarding the use of mobile phones in tutorials. The guidelines should recommend that:

- teaching staff have the right to restrict mobile phone usage according to their discretion

- mobile phones may only be used by students in exceptional circumstances.

Finally, the guidelines need to be university wide and clearly communicated to all staff and students.

# **References**

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# **Appendices**

Additional Supplementary Materials

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