

HNC PAPER MAKING – assignment guidelines

Objectives

To provide the candidate with the opportunity to demonstrate:

- Achievement of learning outcomes associated with areas they have studied
- Understanding of a range of paper making skills, knowledge and techniques in a specific area
- The ability to present this information in a logical and well argued manor

Brief

You will need to present your argument in a logical manner.

Word count - 2000 words

Layout

Front Cover

Identifies you as the writer and gives the project title, as well as protecting the report and contributing to the overall impression.

Title Page

This should include the:

- project title
- your name and job title
- name of the qualification
- month and year in which the dissertation is submitted
- who it is for

Acknowledgements

This is an opportunity to express your formal appreciation for assistance and co-operation received from various people during the dissertation process, and should always be included.

Table of Contents

You should design this to make it easy for the reader to identify and locate the various sections of the project. The headings and sub-headings should be listed, and page numbers shown.

Appendices should be listed (numbered or lettered) in the order in which you have referred to them in the main body of the dissertation.

Terms of Reference

These provide an overall picture of your dissertation and should be concise statements of intent.

Example:

Terms of Reference within a production context could be structured something like this:

- *To investigate productivity within C Section at XYZ Company, over the last 2 years, with a view to increasing it*
- *To generate, research and evaluate possible ways of increasing the productivity*
- *To draw conclusions from the investigation, and to make viable recommendations taking account of the overall financial, legal, environmental and human resource implications for the organisation.*
- *To prepare plans for implementing the recommendations*

Executive Summary (or Synopsis)

Remember that although this is at the front of the report, it is written last! It should catch the reader's interest and focus attention on the more important points covered in the report. It should whet the reader's appetite for what is to follow! For instance, you may like to indicate the potential savings - perhaps by saying "it will demonstrate how £60,000 can be saved by the organisation" - without indicating exactly how at this stage! It will present the dissertation "in miniature" and summarise its essential aspects, such as the purpose, the key outcomes and your recommendations.

Introduction

This will provide the context for the dissertation, and should prepare your assessor for what is to follow. It may include some, or all, of the following:

- brief explanation of the problem under investigation
- the background, circumstances or history
- any assumptions you have made, or any parameters or limitations to the work
- definitions and explanations where necessary (or you might prefer to use a glossary as the last Appendix for easy reference)

The following sections form the main body of the dissertation, and will therefore be considerably more substantial than what has gone before.

The Present Situation

In this section, you should first describe and analyse the present situation or problem. Then go on to identify the nature and scope of the issue or problem you have tackled for your dissertation. You might consider the effects the problem has on other parts of the organisation, or its customers.

Investigation (or Methodology)

Here you should briefly outline the methods you have used to gather information and opinions. It might also include a mention of any difficulties you encountered in your investigation. Include an analysis or summary of your findings from the investigation, using charts and diagrams where appropriate. Details should be confined to an Appendix or Appendices, as appropriate.

You should also describe the paper making theories you have used, and mention any

current legislation which is relevant to your work.

Evaluation of Possible Solutions

In this section you should outline each of your possible alternative courses of action, together with the costs (financial and human) and the benefits of each one. The wider organisational, environmental and legal implications should also be discussed in relation to each possible alternative. Remember, there are always two possible solutions - do something, or do nothing.

Conclusions

These will be a summary of the evaluation of your possible solutions and your conclusions following your research and deliberations. This section should not contain any new evidence!

Recommendations

This should be a clear statement of your proposed recommendations for change to fulfil your Terms of References. Again, remember there are always two alternatives - do something, or do nothing (this is perfectly acceptable if it can be proven to be the best solution!) You should clearly show how you have arrived at the proposal(s), by reference to your conclusions following the evaluation of your possible alternatives (in the previous section). The recommendations do not have to be dramatic or revolutionary, but must address the problem in a realistic and practical manner.

Implementation Plans

This section should also detail your plans for implementing your recommendations, and provide a clear and reasoned financial statement including possible sources for any additional finance which will be required. A separate cost statement may be presented if you wish. The section should also include the sequence of events; the timescale; human resource issues including any training requirements; legal, technological, environmental and communication issues. Remember to stress the positive outcomes, which should result from implementing your proposals.

Appendices

This section may usefully include a glossary of any technical terms or jargon you have used, or supporting evidence arising from the investigation, which is not appropriate to be included in the main body of the dissertation (eg detailed production costings, staffing figures, etc). Remember, that there **must** be adequate cross-referencing between the dissertation and the appendices, to allow the reader to find this supporting information easily.

There is no point in adding an Appendix to which you do not refer in the dissertation. A useful tip here is to put your "potential Appendices" in a pile as you work on your dissertation and **only** when you identify the need for an item when writing the main sections, do you make a cross-reference and include the item as an actual Appendix. The rest can be discarded.

Bibliography

This should indicate the source of articles, theories, etc referred to and developed in your dissertation as a courtesy to the originator, and to allow the assessor to follow these up in more detail if required.

Writing the Report

Keep these points in mind:

- Use appropriate, professional business-like language. Write in the "third person".
At this level you will be penalised for poor grammar, spelling and punctuation
- The dissertation should be word-processed with double line spacing.
- Use plain, white, good quality A4 paper.
- You should make appropriate use of headings and sub-headings, or use numbered sections.
- Number all pages clearly and consistently.
- Make sure the pages are securely fastened into a suitable folder or binder
- You will need to produce only 1 copy.