

How To Write An Academic Report

Learning Enhancement Team

LET@mdx.ac.uk

Variety is the Spice of Life!

Different Schools...

....Different Rules

- Can you use 'I' in an academic text?
- Should an essay have section headings?
- How long is a report?
- Do you use primary or secondary research?
- Footnotes, endnotes or no notes?
- Harvard style referencing or MLA? What about APA?

Which school are you in? What is acceptable and what is unacceptable in your field?

Always check in your module handbooks or with your tutor if you are concerned about appropriacy

Report Writing Workshop Aims

- Gain insight into the characteristics of typical reports
- Learn about and reflect on own writing process
- Look at some possible structures of reports and possible school differences
- Address the language of reports

There are multiple types of reports



Lab report



Business report



Case study report



Technical design report

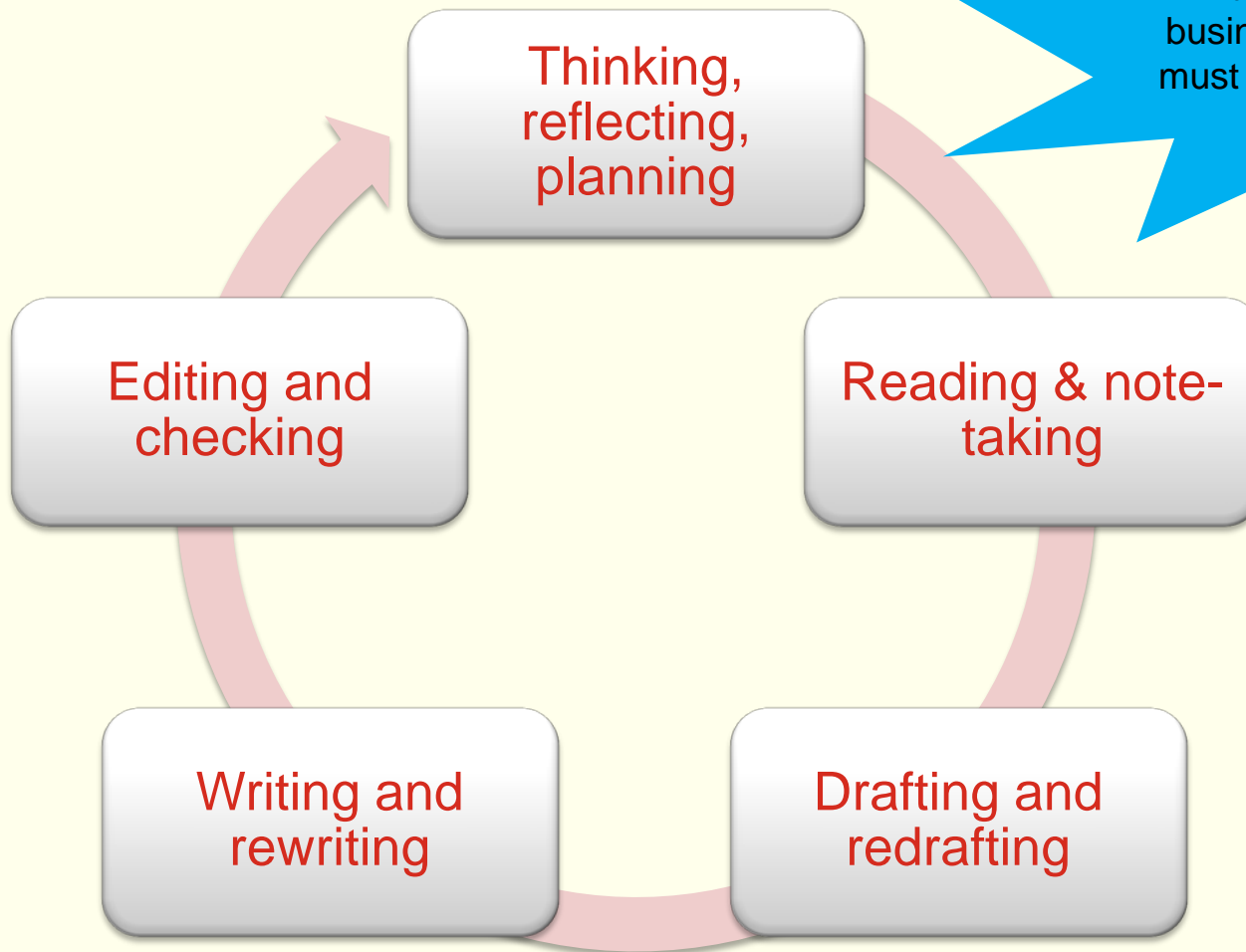
Although there are different types of reports, in general, an academic report is a piece of informative writing, an act of communication and an account of an investigation (Reid, 2012).

An academic report aims to sell a product, idea or points of view (Van Emden and Easteal, 1995).

It should inform, explain and persuade (Williams, 1995) by using well-organised research.

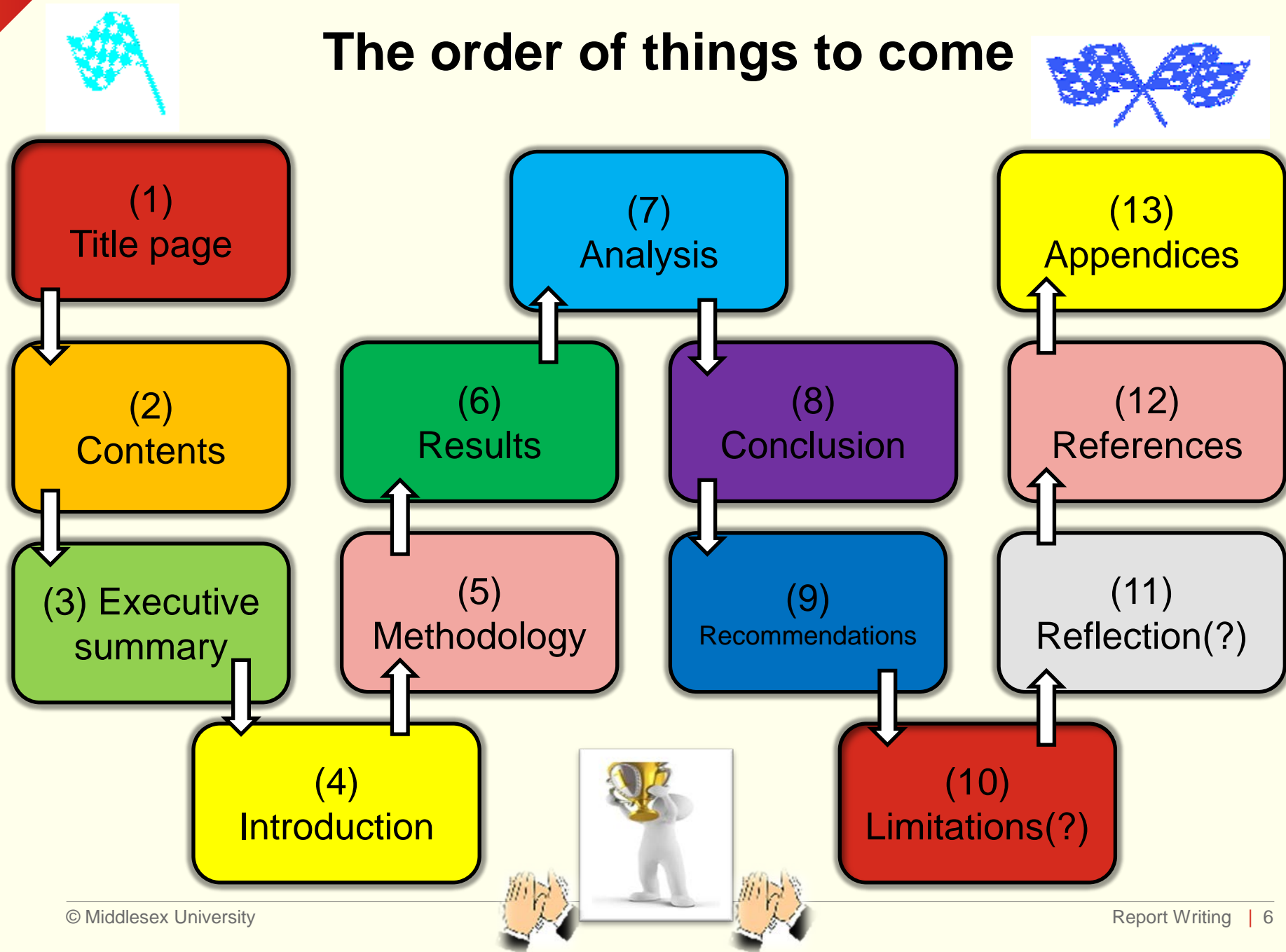
Sometimes it will provide recommendations.

The writing cycle



Remember that the intended reader (tutor, business reps, peers, etc.) must be clearly identified at an early stage.

The order of things to come



Features of continuity

One of the most important challenges that students face when writing a report is ensuring there is **consistency across the document**. This is particularly important when writing group reports. Despite being structured in sections, a report should:

look like a single coherent document

- a single visual style should be used [e.g. font, line-spacing, underlining of headings]
- justify margins








read like a single coherent document

- sections should be linked (bridging)
- information, and approaches to it, must be unified
- writing style should be consistent



Checklist for academic report writing

Do

- Stay on task 
- Address the question set 
- Discuss the chosen organisation's structure 
- Relate the structure to the organisation's goals 
- Discuss its culture 
- Relate the culture to the organisation's goals and structure 
- Discuss any other business functions and how they can be improved 



Remember

- All recommendations must be based on the analysis you have done
- The report must be self-contained, grounded and clear. The reader needs no prior knowledge to understand all aspects.

References

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- Williams, Kate (1995) *Writing Reports: Developing Writing*, Oxford: The Oxford Centre for Staff Development.