Student Handout for the WRiSE site

1 What is WRiSE

The WRiSE (Writing a Report in Science and Engineering) site has been designed to help you to improve your report writing skills in science and engineering.

Since each discipline has its own way of constructing knowledge as well as its own way of writing reports, we have divided the site into separate modules for reports in individual science and engineering disciplines.

WRiSE is a collaborative project among Learning Centres and discipline staff from the Faculties of Science and Engineering at the University of Sydney and the University of New South Wales. Technical development has been provided by staff from the Teaching Development Unit, School of Biological Sciences, the University of Sydney. Funding for WRiSE has been provided by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC).

In creating this site, there are three main principles for successful report writing that we have used to inform our design. They are:

1.1 Context:
We have used example texts from students’ reports in each discipline area as the basis for teaching you about writing a report in that discipline. In addition, we have included comments on these reports from students and lecturers as well as more general comments on report writing in that discipline. Also, information and exercises on discipline-specific content have been included to help you understand the concepts behind the particular report you are writing or more general course content.

1.2 Purpose:
Each report that you write will have its own individual purpose based on the aim of your experiment or field trip. This will be reflected in the structure and content of the report. In addition, your lecturer usually wants you to take on the role of a professional scientist or engineer when writing your report.

1.3 Audience:
Whatever kind of writing you are engaged in, always try to keep in mind your audience. Although reports are usually written for your lecturer in the university context, she/he wants you to write for a knowledgeable scientific or technical audience.

1.4 What you will learn from using the modules in WRiSE:
After using a discipline module, you should be able to:

- understand the overall structure and purpose of a report in your discipline
- know what kind of information belongs in different sections of a report
- structure the information in each section in a logical way
- use scientific/technical language in an appropriate way
- better understand certain concepts in your discipline area
2 How to use the site:
There are two parts to each discipline module: one for help with how to write a report (Help with Report Writing) and one for help with the discipline-specific content (Help with Understanding Content). You can work through the module at your own pace and choose your own order. It is important for you to decide which areas you need to concentrate on.

3 Access
Everyone can use WRiSE. The site is publicly accessible, and available to all staff and students, both inside and outside the Universities of Sydney and New South Wales. For most students, access will be provided by your lecturers via the WRiSE link in your WebCT or Blackboard course unit home page.

Otherwise:

- Type the following link into your browser: http://learningcentre.usyd.edu.au/wrise
- Links to WRiSE will also be put on other University of Sydney and University of New South Wales websites, such as Learning Centre websites, Learning and Teaching sites and eLearning sites.

4 Navigation
The student guide, site map and technical help are available on the WRiSE home page. To enter a specific discipline module, click on its image.

4.1 Module Welcome Page
The Welcome page for each module is divided into two parts (Help with Report Writing) (Help with Understanding Content) and each part is divided into sections. You can go to a particular section by clicking on it in the menu on the left hand side of the screen.

4.2 Moving between Sections
You can navigate between sections or return to the Welcome page or WRiSE home page by clicking on the links at the bottom of the screen.

4.3 Moving within Sections
You can navigate sections in two ways: by clicking on parts of sections in the menu on the left, or by following the screens in order, via the ‘Next’ link, or the Screen number links at the bottom of each screen.

5 We appreciate your feedback
We would appreciate your feedback, both positive and negative, regarding the site. Also, if you encounter any problems in using the program or any parts of the program that don’t make sense, please go to the WRiSE home page and use the email links in Help & Troubleshooting.