The following guidelines are specifically geared towards scientific reports and work terms involving laboratory and/or clinical research. In order to continue in co-op and be able to apply for another work-term, students must receive a “pass” mark for their work-term report. In order to receive a “pass” all sections listed below must be included in the report. In addition, the writing should be concise, coherent, logically organized, scientifically accurate, with appropriate sources/journals properly cited in the references. There should be no, or minimal, spelling, grammar, and/or punctuation errors. The overall report is usually 6-10 pages in length, using standard A4 paper, double-spaced, with size 12 font.

Learning Objectives

a) Develop critical analysis and organizational skills
b) Develop technical and scientific report writing skills
c) Develop reflective and self-evaluative skills pertaining to goals of the position

Format

Title Page
Descriptive title of project, name and location of employer, student name, university, faculty and/or department name(s), year of study, 1st, 2nd or 3rd work term and duration of work term (4 month, 8 month, etc).

Table of Contents
All sections of your report must have titles, listed here in the table of contents with appropriate page numbers. Include a list of figures, tables, graphs, and appendices, if applicable.

Abstract or Summary
The abstract should be a paragraph to a maximum of one-page, and a summary of the main body of your report (see below for details). You should also summarize your key conclusions and recommendations for future work and modifications here. It is easiest to write the abstract or summary last, once you have your main discussion/results section written.

Introduction
Explain your objectives for the report; describe briefly the purpose of the project and how your role fits into the larger framework of the organization/lab you are working in.

Overview of the Work Term
Introduce your employer/organization/research lab and any close collaborators. Describe your roles and responsibilities. Mention the learning goals and how these objectives/goals relate to your academic training. Give an overview of the learning environment, and any training/orientation sessions provided
Main Report/Analytical Section

The type of report prepared and what to include in the discussion/results/analysis section is usually determined by the type of work term and tasks you have performed in your position.

If your role has been more administrative or office work, or involves following a set of instructions for completion of assigned tasks with minimal or no research required, then your report will be more descriptive.

If writing a descriptive report:

- Explain the structure of your role and its products, services or purpose.
- List your responsibilities and objectives of the tasks you were given.
- Mention how your role/tasks contributed to the overall organization.
- Reflective evaluation of how you have developed transferable skills, such as organizational, team-working, communication and time-management skills in the position.
- Show what influence your work term has had on your career goals.
- Relate how your academic program/discipline has prepared you for this position.
- Discuss any areas for improvement in the methodology of tasks/instructions you were given and future recommendations for other students in the same role.
- Reveal which factors seemed to contribute most to your enjoyment of the job.

If your role has been to work on an open-ended question and/or research project that is ongoing in the institution, such as in a pharmaceutical/bio-tech lab, hospital clinical research setting, government lab, basic research or discovery lab setting, then your report should resemble a scientific paper.

If reporting on such a research project or preparing a special project report, your work term report must include all the components listed above for a descriptive report, along with those listed below:

- The research question/hypothesis and purpose of the project being conducted.
- A detailed description of your research methodology.
- A detailed description of your observations.
- Logical and rational analysis of your observations, based on scientific evidence and background research.
- Conclusions you have reached based on analysis of your observations and recommendations for future work/how to continue the project.
- Reflective evaluation of what you personally achieved in and contributed to the project, both in terms of transferable skills as well as scientific progress of the
Conclusions

Summarize the most important points of your analysis, future directions and what you have achieved in the role. You should mention any insight you may have gained in terms of future career goals, and any applicable skills acquired that will serve you in your academic program/discipline. It is important to reflect critically on your experience and its outcomes, as well as how it relates to your academic discipline and the goals you wish to achieve.

Recommendations

Suggest a course of action or solution to remedy problems that you may have encountered in your work term, or what should be done with the data/findings you obtained in the project and where should further efforts be concentrated. You may, for example, provide suggestions to the next student who holds the same or similar position.

References

References or Footnotes

Cite sources of any quotes, as well as all scientific sources and papers used. Proper formatting for scientific journals related to your discipline should be used (for example, chemistry related reports should all follow ACS journal formatting for references).

Bibliography

List the books and electronic sources you consulted during your research.

Glossary

Define any jargon or technical terms used in your report that are unique to your field, company or industry.

Appendices

- Include charts, tables or graphics
- Include any material that is descriptive in nature (for example, guides on how to use micropipettes, how to run a column chromatography or use any instrument/software you learned to use while on your role)