



**NATIONAL COMPETITIVE EVENTS
PRODUCTION TEST
REFERENCE GUIDE**

Updated: September 8, 2025

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OVERVIEW

In today's business world, written communication remains important. One aspect of successful businesses is consistent messaging throughout the organization through a specific format guide. For FBLA, this format guide is offered to assist members in specific competitions and to assist advisers with classroom resources.

COMPETITION USE

The format guide is approved for use during the production portion of specific production tests.

<u>Middle School</u>	<u>High School</u>	<u>Collegiate</u>
Slide Deck Applications	Computer Applications	Business Communication
Spreadsheet Applications		Computer Applications

GENERAL GUIDELINES & FORMATTING NOTES

Sample documents in the *Production Test Reference Guide* may not show the correct margins due to the instructions and formatting on the sample pages.

FONT INFORMATION

- Body text: Calibri, 11 point
- Headings: Calibri, 14 point, bold
- Alignment: Left-aligned text unless otherwise indicated
- Margins: 1 inch with header and footer margins .5 inch unless otherwise indicated
- Quotes should be indented .5 inch from the side margins

SPACING

- Line: Single spaced unless otherwise indicated
- Paragraph: Should be 0 pt before and after unless otherwise indicated
 - Use one blank line between paragraphs

BULLETED AND NUMBERED LISTS

Lists may be inserted into most business documents.

- Use single spacing for list items
- One blank line before and after a list

TABLES

Tables are commonly inserted into a variety of documents. While word processing software makes inserting tables easy, some standard business format guidelines remain.

- Titles and column headings should be bold
- Column headings should be centered over the column
- Tables using both one- and two-line column headings should be aligned at the bottom of the cell
- Gridlines are optional unless specifically stated otherwise
- If gridlines are not used, underline column headings (bottom line only if more than one line)
- Do not include \$ with dollar amounts in columns. Dollar signs may be placed in the total row
- All columns containing text should be left-aligned
- Tables within another document should be centered horizontally unless otherwise indicated
- One blank line before and after the table within another document

STANDARDS OF MAILABILITY

Producing customer-ready documents is an important business function. Following this guide along with proofreading and format review are important steps in the completion of any document.

The following errors will be reflected on the rating sheet scoring:

Minor errors that will make the document still usable:

- Omission of a nonessential part of a document (e.g. reference initials, enclosure notation, etc.)
- Minor errors in vertical or horizontal placement
- Minor spacing errors
- Inserted or omitted words that do not change the meaning of the sentence

Major errors will make the document unusable without corrections:

- Keying or spelling errors
- Inserted or omitted words that change the meaning of the sentence
- Formatting error
- Failure to follow direction

PRODUCTION & DOCUMENT FORMATTING

ENVELOPES

Font: Calibri, 11 point

Return Address: upper left corner, regular case

Mailing Address: centered, ALL CAPS, no punctuation (except ZIP+4 if used)

Stamp: Upper right corner

The mailing address format should be the following:

<u>Personal Address</u>	<u>Business Address</u>	<u>Example:</u>
RECIPIENT NAME	NAME*	JOHN DOE
STREET ADDRESS	TITLE*	DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS
CITY STATE ZIP CODE	DEPARTMENT NAME*	ABC CORPORATION
	BUSINESS NAME	456 PROFESSIONAL AVE
	STREET ADDRESS	CHICAGO IL 60611-1234
	CITY STATE ZIP CODE	

*Not required by postal service for distribution and delivery and are optional for the mailer.

Street Address

- Use a Post Office box or street address, but not both. If the address also has a directional (NW for Northwest), be sure to use it.
- When abbreviating Post Office Box as part of an address, it should be PO Box ###.

Abbreviations

- Using the two-letter state abbreviations make it possible to enter the city, state, and Zip Code on the last line of the address.

<u>State</u>	<u>Abbreviation</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Abbreviation</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Abbreviation</u>
Alabama	AL	Louisiana	LA	Ohio	OH
Alaska	AK	Maine	ME	Oklahoma	OK
Arizona	AZ	Maryland	MD	Oregon	OR
Arkansas	AR	Massachusetts	MA	Pennsylvania	PA
California	CA	Michigan	MI	Rhode Island	RI
Colorado	CO	Minnesota	MN	South Carolina	SC
Connecticut	CT	Mississippi	MS	South Dakota	SD
Delaware	DE	Missouri	MO	Tennessee	TN
Florida	FL	Montana	MT	Texas	TX
Georgia	GA	Nebraska	NE	Utah	UT
Hawaii	HI	Nevada	NV	Vermont	VT
Idaho	ID	New Hampshire	NH	Virginia	VA
Illinois	IL	New Jersey	NJ	Washington	WA
Indiana	IN	New Mexico	NM	West Virginia	WV
Iowa	IA	New York	NY	Wisconsin	WI
Kansas	KS	North Carolina	NC	Wyoming	WY
Kentucky	KY	North Dakota	ND		

Name
Address
City, State Zip Code

JOHN DOE
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS
ABC CORPORATION
456 PROFESSIONAL AVE
CHICAGO IL 60611-1234

ITINERARY

Itineraries are used to facilitate both personal and business travel. Chapters may find preparing a conference itinerary for attendees ahead of departure helpful. While similar to a meeting or conference agenda, the itinerary focus is on travel and agendas focus on specific items within a meeting or conference.

FORMAT:

- Be consistent on time format (e.g., 8:00 AM)
- Leave a blank row before and after any headings for ease of readability

Second & Subsequent Pages (if necessary):

- Header: Right aligned
 - Line one: Conference/Event Name
 - Line two: Date(s) and page number
- Repeat column headings at the top for clarity

Key pieces include:

- Travel Information
 - Flight information including flight numbers, airports, layover times
 - Rental car information
 - Public transportation information
- Lodging Information
 - Name of lodging
 - Address
 - Confirmation number
- Key Activities
 - Dates/times
 - Location
 - Short description (optional)

NLC ITINERARY (*bold*)

(1 blank line)

June 28-July 3, 20XX (*bold*)

(1 blank line)

June 28: Arrival Day (*bold*)

(1 blank line)

8:30 AM Check-In for Flight to Anaheim (SNA)

2:00 PM BNA to SNA, United Flight 990. Confirmation 56782. After collecting bags, proceed to Shuttle Stop 21 for shuttle to hotel

4:00 PM Hotel Check-In. Anaheim Hilton, 777 Convention Way Anaheim, CA 92802. Confirmation #457869

6:00 PM Evening at Disney. Park closes at 11:00 PM

(1 blank line)

June 29: Conference Start (*bold*)

(1 blank line)

6:00 PM Opening Session – Anaheim Convention Center, Hall E

(1 blank line)

June 30: Competitive Events (*bold*)

(1 blank line)

8:00 AM Competitive Events– Various Locations

6:00 PM Bus Departs for Medieval Times

(1 blank line)

July 1: Awards Session (*bold*)

(1 blank line)

7:00 PM Awards of Excellence Program

(1 blank line)

July 3: Departure Day (*bold*)

(1 blank line)

7:00 AM Airport Shuttle Departure.

8:00 AM Check-In for Flight to Nashville. SNA to BNA United Airlines Flight 890.

NLC ITINERARY

June 28-July 3, 20XX

June 28: Arrival Day

8:30 AM	Check-In for Flight to Anaheim (SNA)
2:00 PM	BNA to SNA, United Flight 990. Confirmation 56782. After collecting bags, proceed to Shuttle Stop 21 for shuttle to hotel
4:00 PM	Hotel Check-In. Anaheim Hilton, 777 Convention Way Anaheim, CA 92802. Confirmation #457869
6:00 PM	Evening at Disney. Park closes at 11:00 PM

June 29: Conference Start

6:00 PM	Opening Session – Anaheim Convention Center, Hall E
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June 30: Competitive Events

8:00 AM	Competitive Events– Various Locations
6:00 PM	Bus Departs for Medieval Times

July 1: Awards Session

7:00 PM	Awards of Excellence Program
---------	------------------------------

July 3: Departure Day

7:00 AM	Airport Shuttle Departure.
8:00 AM	Check-In for Flight to Nashville. SNA to BNA United Airlines Flight 890.

LETTERS - PERSONAL & BUSINESS

Personal letters are informal communications meant for friends and family, allowing for casual expression of thoughts and feelings. In contrast, business letters are formal documents used in professional settings to convey information, requests, or inquiries, requiring a clear and respectful tone. Both types serve distinct purposes and follow different formats. The business letter sample shows a letter with all the additional features that may be used in the workplace. The top margin on the business letter may have to be adjusted for a printed business header, potentially including the company logo.

First Page Margins:

- Top: 1"
- Sides: 1"
- Bottom: 1"

Second & Subsequent Pages:

- Top Margin: 1"
- Header: Left aligned, Single Spaced
 - Line one: Name of recipient or company
 - Line two: Page X
 - Line three: Current Date

Special Considerations:

- On a personal letter, the return address and current date will appear before the recipient.
- On a business letter the date and any mailing notations will appear before the recipient.
- A business letter may contain a subject line located below the salutation.
- The mailing notation and subject line should be in capital letters.
- The contact information shall be placed in the signature of a business letter if not identified in a corporate header.
- Text should be left justified unless otherwise noted.
- Block style format.
- No punctuation in salutation and closing lines.
- Include "Enclosure(s)" at the end of the letter if appropriate.

12100 Sunset Hills Drive, Suite 200
Reston, VA 20190

(1 blank line)

Current Date

(1 blank line)

Mr. Jim Abel
1000 Multnomah Street
Portland, OR 97232

(1 blank line)

Dear Mr. Abel

(1 blank line)

This letter is an example of a personal business letter in the format used in FBLA competition. This basic format is identical to the more formal business letter. One component that would not be used in this type of letter is the typist initials. Since it is a personal business letter, it is understood that the creator of the letter is the one that would be keying the document.

(1 blank line)

Thank you for taking time to read this description.

(1 blank line)

Sincerely

(3 blank lines)

Jennifer Maldonado

Personal Business Letter

12100 Sunset Hills Drive, Suite 200
Reston, VA 20190

Current Date

Personal Business Letter

Mr. Jim Abel
1000 Multnomah Street
Portland, OR 97232

Dear Mr. Abel

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Thank you for taking time to read this description.

Sincerely

Jennifer Maldonado

Current Date

(1 blank line)

CONFIDENTIAL

(1 blank line)

Attention FBLA Competitors

FBLA, Inc.

12100 Sunset Hills Drive, Suite 200

Reston, VA 20190

(1 blank line)

FBLA Competitors

(1 blank line)

FORMAL BUSINESS LETTER WITH ADVANCED FEATURES

(1 blank line)

This letter is an example of a formal business letter that includes advanced letter parts that you may be asked to include during a production test. It is in block style with open punctuation, which means all lines start at the left margin and no punctuation follows the salutation or closing.

The word confidential in all caps is a mailing notation. The subject line, if indicated for inclusion, is two lines below the salutation. Should a subject line not be required, there is a blank line between the salutation and body of the letter.

At the conclusion of the body of the letter is the closing, leave three blank lines for the signature, then the typed name of the sender with their title below. The correct and widely accepted notation for sending copies of a letter is cc: (two lowercase "c"s followed by a colon). If multiple people are copied, the others would be on separate lines lined up with the first name.

The enclosure notation is utilized to indicate any additional documents placed in the same envelope. If so, key the word enclosure, a colon, one space and the title of the enclosure. If there are additional enclosures, are listed directly underneath the first one.

My hope is that this letter has been instructive in the parts of a formal business letter that you may encounter during your exam. Please do not forget that proofreading skills are also important.

(1 blank line)

Sincerely

(3 blank lines)

Cindy Fraser

Senior Vice President

(1 blank line)

cc: FBLA Competitive Events Committee

(1 blank line)

Enclosure: Updated Scoring Guide

Business Letter

Current Date

CONFIDENTIAL

Attention FBLA Competitors
FBLA, Inc.
12100 Sunset Hills Drive, Suite 200
Reston, VA 20190

Business Letter

FBLA Competitors

FORMAL BUSINESS LETTER WITH ADVANCED FEATURES

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The enclosure notation is utilized to indicate any additional documents placed in the same envelope. If so, key the word enclosure, a colon, one space and the title of the enclosure. If there are additional enclosures, are listed directly underneath the first one.

My hope is that this letter has been instructive in the parts of a formal business letter that you may encounter during your exam. Please do not forget that proofreading skills are also important.

Sincerely

Cindy Fraser
Senior Vice President

cc: FBLA Competitive Events Committee

Enclosure: Updated Scoring Guide

MEETING AGENDA

The following pages show the format of a meeting agenda for a meeting. Creating an agenda several days/weeks ahead of a meeting can help participants be better prepared for productivity.

First Page Margins:

- Top: 2"
- Sides: 1"
- Bottom: 1"

Second & Subsequent Pages:

- Top Margin: 1"
- Header: Left aligned, Single Spaced
 - Line one: AGENDA - XXX (XXX representing organization name)
 - Line two: Page X
 - Line three: Date of meeting

Special Considerations:

- Heading should include the word Agenda along with organization name, meeting type, date, time, and location.
- Agenda items should be listed by time or enumerated.
- If no future meeting date is set, exclude "Date of Next Meeting"
- Always include Unfinished Business regardless of unfinished business items.
- Main and subheadings should be keyed in boldface.

WASHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL FBLA (*bold, all caps*)

(1 blank line)

Chapter Meeting Agenda (*bold*)

(1 blank line)

Wednesday, September 15, 20XX, 6:00 p.m. (*bold*)

(1 blank line)

Room 234

(1 blank line)

1. Call to Order – Suzanne Smith, Chapter President
(1 blank line)
2. Roll Call – Tessa Ross, Secretary
(1 blank line)
3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes – Tessa Ross, Secretary
(1 blank line)
4. Treasurer’s Report – Mark Simmons, Treasurer
(1 blank line)
5. Other Officer Reports
(1 blank line)
6. Committee Reports
 - Fundraising – Beth Poole
 - Competition Prep – Korrie Williams**(1 blank line)**
7. Unfinished Business
(1 blank line)
8. New Business
(1 blank line)
9. Date of Next Meeting
(1 blank line)
10. Adjournment

WASHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL FBLA

Chapter Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, September 15, 20XX, 6:00 p.m.

Room 234

1. Call to Order – Suzanne Smith, Chapter President
2. Roll Call – Tessa Ross, Secretary
3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes – Tessa Ross, Secretary
4. Treasurer’s Report – Mark Simmons, Treasurer
5. Other Officer Reports
6. Committee Reports
 - a. Fundraising – Beth Poole
 - b. Competition Prep – Korrie Williams
7. Unfinished Business
8. New Business
9. Date of Next Meeting
10. Adjournment

MEETING MINUTES

The following pages show the format of meeting minutes. Using the agenda as the basis for minutes can help facilitate accurate and timely completion.

First Page Margins:

- Top: 2"
- Sides: 1"
- Bottom: 1"

Second & Subsequent Pages:

- Top Margin: 1"
- Header: Left aligned, Single Spaced
 - Line one: MINUTES - XXX (XXX representing organization name)
 - Line two: Page X
 - Line three: Date

Special Considerations:

- If no future meeting date is set, exclude "Date of Next Meeting"
- Always include Unfinished Business regardless of unfinished business items.
- Text should be left justified unless otherwise noted.
- Main and subheadings should be keyed in boldface.
- Three blank lines should be left above the secretary's name and title for signature.

WASHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL FBLA (*bold*)

(1 blank line)

Minutes of September 15, 20XX (*bold*)

(1 blank line)

Call to Order (*bold*)

The regular meeting of Washington High School FBLA was called to order on Wednesday, September 15, 20XX at 6:00 p.m.

(1 blank line)

Attendance (*bold*)

Fifteen of twenty members were in attendance.

(1 blank line)

Minutes (*bold*)

The minutes of the August 15, 20XX meeting were read. Justin Vaugh moved to approve the minutes as read. The motion was seconded, and the minutes approved.

(1 blank line)

Treasurer's Report (*bold*)

Treasurer Mark Simmons reported a balance of \$375 as of September 1, 20XX. The report was filed.

(1 blank line)

Fundraising Report (*bold*)

Beth Poole reported that the car wash would be held on September 21 and members needed to sign up for shifts.

(1 blank line)

Competition Prep Report (*bold*)

Korrie Williams reported that a competition prep session for districts would be held on September 20 from 3-5 p.m.

(1 blank line)

Unfinished Business (*bold*)

None.

(1 blank line)

New Business (*bold*)

None.

(1 blank line)

Announcements (*bold*)

The next meeting will be on October 1, 20XX at noon.

(1 blank line)

Adjournment (*bold*)

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

(3 blank lines)

Tessa Ross, Secretary

WASHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL FBLA

Minutes of September 15, 20XX

Call to Order

The regular meeting of Washington High School FBLA was called to order on Wednesday, September 15, 20XX at 6:00 p.m.

Attendance

Fifteen of 20 members were in attendance.

Minutes

The minutes of the August 15, 20XX meeting were read. Justin Vaugh moved to approve the minutes as read. The motion was seconded, and the minutes approved.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Mark Simmons reported a balance of \$375 as of August 1, 20XX. The report was filed.

Fundraising Report

Beth Poole reported that the car wash would be held on September 21 and members needed to sign up for shifts.

Competition Prep Report

Korrie Williams reported that a competition prep session for districts would be held on September 20 from 3-5 p.m.

Unfinished Business

None.

New Business

None.

Announcements

The next meeting will be on October 1, 20XX at noon.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Tessa Ross, Secretary

MEMORANDUM

A memorandum or memo for short is a concise written message used within an organization to communicate information, updates, or directives. It typically addresses a specific audience and is often used for internal communication. Memos replace needing to merge business letters to send to a mass audience.

First Page Margins:

- Top: 1"
- Sides: 1"
- Bottom: 1"

Second & Subsequent Pages:

- Top Margin: 1"
- Header: Left aligned, Single Spaced
 - Line one: MEMORANDUM - XXX (XXX representing name of recipient(s))
 - Line two: Page X
 - Line three: Date

Special Considerations:

- "MEMORANDUM" should always be in capital letters, 16 pt, bold font.
- Memos should always contain headings of "TO", "FROM", "DATE", and "SUBJECT"
- "CC" is an optional line and should be placed after the "TO" with one blank line above and below.
- Memo headings should be in capital letters, bold font.
- Text should be left justified unless otherwise noted.
- Include "Enclosure(s)" or "Attachment(s)" at the end of the memo, if appropriate.
- The sender should initial next to their name on the FROM line when printed.

MEMORANDUM *(bold)*

(1 blank line)

TO: Lisa Morris

(1 blank line)

FROM: Tessa Davis, Vice President

(1 blank line)

DATE: Current Date

(1 blank line)

SUBJECT: Formatting Memos

(1 blank line)

Memos are formal documents with a simple format. Memos have largely been replaced by email, though they still exist in the workplace.

(1 blank line)

There are five key words that should be in all caps, Memo, To, From, Date, and Subject are the words which define a memo. The word Memo should be bold and centered at the 2" top margin. The other key words should also be in bold. Double line spacing separates these key words and paragraphs.

(1 blank line)

Enclosure or attachment can be used at the end of the memo if additional items like a flyer or paperwork are included. The sender should initial the memo next to their name in the from line.

(1 blank line)

Enclosure

MEMORANDUM

TO: Lisa Morris

FROM: Tessa Davis, Vice President

DATE: Current Date

SUBJECT: Formatting Memos

Memos are formal documents with a simple format. Memos have largely been replaced by email, though they still exist in the workplace.

There are five key words that should be in all caps, Memo, To, From, Date, and Subject are the words which define a memo. The word Memo should be bold and centered at the 2" top margin. The other key words should also be in bold. Double line spacing separates these key words and paragraphs.

Enclosure or attachment can be used at the end of the memo if additional items like a flyer or paperwork are included. The sender should initial the memo next to their name in the from line.

Enclosure

PRESS RELEASE

A **press release** is a written communication directed at the media to announce something newsworthy, such as an event, product launch, or organizational update. Its purpose is to inform journalists and the public in a clear, concise, and professional manner. The usual length of a press release is one page long, or roughly 400-500 words with short sentences and clear descriptors.

Special Considerations:

- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE should be the first line if for immediate release or PRESS RELEASE. It should be bold.
- Headline should be bold and attention-grabbing.
- Dateline should include release date.
- City and state should be at the beginning of the first paragraph in parenthesis.
- Body paragraphs should be short, concise, and newsworthy.
- Boilerplate/Contact info should appear at the end with contact for media inquiries
- If more than one page, end the first page with '(more...)'.
- End notation should be # # # to signal the release is complete. This should be centered.

Key Items Include:

- Title
- Headline
- Body
- Ending
- Contact Information

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (bold)

(1 blank line)

DATE

(3 blank lines)

WASHINGTON FBLA MEMBERS QUALIFY FOR NATIONAL CONFERENCE **(bold)**

(3 blank lines)

(City, State) Ten members of the Washington High School chapter of Future Business Leaders of America have qualified to represent Rhode Island at the National Leadership Conference this June in San Antonio, Texas.

(1 blank line)

The qualifying members will have the opportunity to participate in competition and leadership workshops with more than 11,000 other members from across the country.

(1 blank line)

To cover the costs of this conference, the members are actively raising the funds needed. Community members can assist by attending a pancake breakfast on May 15 from 7:30 AM to 11:00 AM in the high school cafeteria. The cost of breakfast is \$10 per person. Children under two may eat for free.

(1 blank line)

Any community member that wishes to make a donation may do so through the chapter's portal at www.washingtonfblachapter.org.

(1 blank line)

###

(1 blank line)

CONTACT:

Susan Edwards, FBLA Adviser
Washington High School
555-555-5555
sedwards@whsfbla.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE

WASHINGTON FBLA MEMBERS QUALIFY FOR NATIONAL CONFERENCE (bold)

(City, State) Ten members of the Washington High School chapter of Future Business Leaders of America have qualified to represent Rhode Island at the National Leadership Conference this June in San Antonio, Texas.

The qualifying members will have the opportunity to participate in competition and leadership workshops with more than 11,000 other members from across the country.

To cover the costs of this conference, the members are actively raising the funds needed. Community members can assist by attending a pancake breakfast on May 15 from 7:30 AM to 11:00 AM in the high school cafeteria. The cost of breakfast is \$10 per person. Children under two may eat for free.

Any community member that wishes to make a donation may do so through the chapter's portal at www.washingtonfblachapter.org.

###

CONTACT:
Susan Edwards, FBLA Adviser
Washington High School
555-555-5555
sedwards@whsfbla.org

REPORTS

For the purposes of production test events, FBLA follows the MLA Format. Other than the left margin, the format is the same for left-bound or unbound reports. The only difference is that the left-bound has a left margin of 1.5 inches instead of 1 inch.

First Page Margins (left-bound):

- Top: 1"
- Right: 1"
- Left: 1.5"
- Bottom: 1"

Margins (unbound): 1" all sides

Line spacing (left-bound and unbound): Double-spaced

Second & Subsequent Pages:

- Top Margin: 1"
- Header: Last name + page number, right aligned (Name 2)

Special Considerations:

- The report title is typed in Title Case (capitalize first letter of each word).
- The report title should not be bold.
- Only include a report title page if told to do so. A title page is helpful when there is more than one author for the report. Centered (both vertically and horizontally on page), all double-spaced with same font as body text of report.
 - Title of the paper (in Title Case, no bold/underline/italics)
 - Student's full name (list others double-space below)
 - Instructor's name
 - Course name/number
 - Date of submission
- If no title page (most common in MLA), first page starts with the heading (left-aligned and double-spaced). Title is centered below this, double-spaced.
 - Student Name
 - Instructor's name
 - Course name/number
 - Date

The Impact on Client Success in Today's Society

(1 blank line)

Jack Smith

(1 blank line)

Jane Jones

(1 blank line)

Dr. Ross Hughes

(1 blank line)

Business 101

(1 blank line)

October 1, 20XX

The Impact on Client Success in Today's Society

Jack Smith

Jane Jones

Dr. Ross Hughes

Business 101

October 1, 20XX

Ellie Li

Dr. L Warnock

Business 105

12 June 20XX

Formatting Reports

Use of MLA (bold)

The Modern Language Association, MLA, is the basis for both formatting the left bound and unbound reports, but also for organizing the contents. This format is used primarily in humanities and literature reports.

Standard Margins (bold)

Except for the left margin, all margin settings are one inch for unbound and left bound reports. The left margin for a left bound report should be 1.5 inches.

Page Numbering (bold)

The first page of a report may or may not be numbered, depending on the requirement of the instructor assigning the paper. On the second and subsequent pages, last name of the report author and the page number will appear in the header, right aligned. It is possible to set the document to automatically update the page number in the header throughout the report.

Title Page (bold)

Academic research reports written by a single author do not need a title page. Those reports would contain the first page heading as shown above. If the report is the result of a group of authors, a title page should be created with each author listed.

Long Quotations (bold)

If a quote is longer than four lines, it should be indented one-inch from the left margin. The text of the quote would still be double-spaced.

Headings and Subheadings (bold)

Headings and subheadings are organizational tools for content. When used inside of a Word document or Google Doc, headings allow for easy reference inside of the digital document and for automation of a table of contents. The Modern Language Association states that a table of contents would be suggested for a longer report “such as a theses or dissertation.” (MLA, <https://style.mla.org/paper-table-of-contents/>)

Endnotes (bold)

Endnotes, if utilized, are placed at the end of the report, and the endnote is cited by a superscript number in the text. A section titled “Notes” should be used. Endnotes should be double spaced. Only use endnotes if requested by your instructor.

Works Cited Page (bold)

All referenced items will be listed alphabetically on a page with a heading of Works Cited. Each referenced work should be double spaced, with a second line indented one-half inch from the left margin.

Ellie Li

Dr. L Warnock

Business 105

12 June 20XX

Formatting Reports

Use of MLA

The Modern Language Association, MLA, is the basis for both formatting the left bound and unbound reports, but also for organizing the contents. This format is used primarily in humanities and literature reports.

Standard Margins

Except for the left margin, all margin settings are one inch for unbound and left bound reports. The left margin for a left bound report should be 1.5 inches.

Page Numbering

The first page of a report may or may not be numbered, depending on the requirement of the instructor assigning the paper. On the second and subsequent pages, last name of the report author and the page number will appear in the header, right aligned. It is possible to set the document to automatically update the page number in the header throughout the report.

Title Page

Academic research reports written by a single author do not need a title page. Those reports would contain the first page heading as shown above. If the report is the result of a group of authors, a title page should be created with each author listed.

Long Quotations

If a quote is longer than four lines, it should be indented one inch from the left margin. The text of the quote would still be double-spaced.

Headings and Subheadings

Headings and subheadings are organizational tools for content. When used inside of a Word document or Google Doc, headings allow for easy reference inside of the digital document and for automation of a table of contents. The Modern Language Association states that a table of contents would be suggested for a longer report “such as a theses or dissertation.” (MLA, <https://style.mla.org/paper-table-of-contents/>)

Endnotes

Endnotes, if utilized, are placed at the end of the report, and the endnote is cited by a superscript number in the text. A section titled “Notes” should be used. Endnotes should be double spaced. Endnotes should be double spaced. Only use endnotes if requested by your instructor.

Works Cited Page

All referenced items will be listed alphabetically on a page with a heading of Works Cited. Each referenced work should be double spaced, with a second line indented one-half inch from the left margin.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A table of contents is generally used for longer projects such as theses or dissertations, but if you are required to include a table of contents for a shorter report, create a title page and then place the table of contents, labeled “Contents,” by itself on the next page. The margins should be the same as the report margins.

First Page Margins:

- Top: 1”
- Sides: 1” (left bound report would have 1.5 inch left margin)
- Bottom: 1”

Second & Subsequent Pages:

- Top Margin: 1”
- Header: Follow the standards of the report/project

Special Considerations:

- Contents should be bold, capitalized, and center-aligned
- Roman numerals (if used) can be right or left aligned
- Page numbers should be right aligned with tab leaders
- Parts of the contents should be capitalized
- Subparts of the contents should be indented from the previous level
- Indents are one-half inch from previous level

CONTENTS (bold)
(1 blank line)

INTRODUCTION TO OCEAN ECOSYSTEMS

(1 blank line)

Understanding Ocean Zones.....	2
The Importance of Biodiversity.....	4

(1 blank line)

KEY OCEAN ECOSYSTEMS

(1 blank line)

Coral Reefs	5
Structure and Function	6
Threats and Conservation	7
Deep Sea	8
Mangroves and Estuaries.....	9

(1 blank line)

THE FUTURE OF OCEAN CONSERVATION

(1 blank line)

Innovative Conservation Strategies	10
Policy and Legislation.....	12
The Role of Community Engagement	12

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WORKS CITED

A Works Cited page is a comprehensive list of sources referenced in a written work, formatted according to a specific citation style, such as MLA. It provides essential information about each source, allowing readers to locate the original materials used to support the author's arguments or claims.

First Page Margins:

- Top: 1"
- Sides: 1" (left bound report would have 1.5 inch left margin)
- Bottom: 1"

Second & Subsequent Pages:

- Top Margin: 1"
- Header: Follow the standards of the report/project

Special Considerations:

- Center the title Works Cited at the top of the page.
- Use double spacing throughout the entire page.
- Use a hanging indent: first line of each entry flush left, all subsequent lines indented 0.5 inch.
- Alphabetize entries by the author's last name. If no author, alphabetize by the first significant word of the title (ignore A, An, The).
- If two authors, list both in the order given, with and between. Three or more authors should only list the first author followed by et al.
- Titles of books, journals, websites, and films should be italicized.
- Titles of articles, webpages, essays, and chapters should be in quotation marks.
- Include URLs for online source (without http://).
- Long URLs can be broken at logical points (like after a slash).
- Every entry ends with a period, even after a URL.

Works Cited (entire document double-spaced)

Doe, Jane. *The Wonders of Ocean Life: An Exploration of Marine Biodiversity*. Ocean Press, 2024.

Doe, John. "The Role of Marine Protected Areas in Conservation." *Marine Ecology Review*, vol. 34, no. 4, 2025, pp. 56-78.

"Exploring the Depths: A Journey Through the Ocean." *National Geographic*, 15 June 2024, www.nationalgeographic.com/ocean-exploration. Accessed 14 Oct. 2024.

Green, Emily. "Five Fascinating Facts About Sharks." *YouTube*, uploaded by Emily Green, 12 Mar. 2024, www.youtube.com/watch?v=abcdefg1234.

"Marine Conservation: Strategies for the Future." *Ocean Awareness Network*, www.oceans.org/marine-conservation-strategies. Accessed 14 Oct. 2024.

Smith, John. "The Impact of Climate Change on Coral Reefs." *Journal of Marine Science*, vol. 45, no. 2, 2023, pp. 123-145.