

# The Experimental Report

**This sheet contains generic advice about writing an experimental report. It does NOT replace instructions specific to your task.** The key purpose of an experimental report is to introduce a hypothesis, describe a method to test this hypothesis, report the results, and draw conclusions from the findings. Generally, an experimental report is shaped like an hourglass: the introduction starts out relatively broadly; the relevant literature is then reviewed; the focus then narrows down to the specific aim(s) of the experiment and the hypothesis being tested, the method/s used, and the statistical findings; and then the report broadens out again in the discussion to incorporate implications and future directions. This structure is reflected below.

**Title:** provides a concise statement of the experiment. Often includes the **independent** and **dependent variable**.

**Abstract:** gives an overview of the experiment and briefly summarises each section of the report. **Common errors:** Not communicating major findings, not including all sections, and/or including too much detail in some sections.

**Introduction:** Contains sufficiently detailed background information. Generally provides an overview of the relevant literature and the context of the experiment, and almost always ends with the specific experimental **aim(s)** and **hypothesis** (and associated **predictions**). **Common errors:** Not including the hypothesis and including information that belongs elsewhere.

**Method Section:** Provides an accurate and concise description of exactly how the hypothesis was tested. Start writing this section during the

