

Project Reports – Frequently Asked Questions

Please also discuss content and structure of your report with your supervisor!!!

- 1. Should our references be included as footnotes or is a bibliography at the end of the project sufficient?**

We have in fact no rule whether references should be included as footnotes or is a bibliography at the end of the project. Either style would be fine. However, most reports that we receive include a bibliography at the end of the project and this should be fine.

- 2. Will references be included in the page count, and should they also be double spaced?**

The references are not included in the 30 page limit (title page, table of content, references and acknowledgements do not count the page limit). References do not need to be 1,5 or double spaced and the font size may be smaller.

- 3. I was wondering if there is a particular referencing style that you would prefer?**

The references should be coherent and adhere to the style of an internationally accepted chemistry journal. We usually recommend the RSC style (see Chem. Commun.), or the ACS style (see Journal of the American Chemical Society) or the Wiley style (see Angewandte Chemie Int. Ed.). However, we have no real preference.

- 4. Is it possible for us to include some particularly relevant spectra etc in an appendix at the end of the report, outside the core 30pages, as well as submitting a folder with all of our spectra?**

It will be fine to include some important data including spectra in an appendix. I sometimes find a short appendix very helpful when I mark reports. However, the appendices should not be too excessive. It should only contain things that aren't necessary for the understanding of the report, but may be of useful reference for the examiner e.g: spectra, crystallographic tables etc. They should not be used to extend the report and may or may not be looked at by the examiners.

- 5. I was wondering if you want all of our spectra submitted along with our lab books, or just the more relevant ones?**

I think it might be good if you would be able to submit all your spectra with your lab book (in case the examiners want to have a look). It is good scientific practise.

- 6. It states that my supervisor should receive the draft copy of the project in November, I just want to clarify, is it my supervisor in Denmark? Or someone in Trinity?**

You should submit a draft copy to your supervisor in Denmark. This just ensures that your supervisor has an input and gives you some guidance with writing the report. It is fairly informal but in previous years we had cases where students had no guidance from their supervisor and we wanted to avoid this.

- 7. I was wondering with regard to experimental notebook, say for example you are (like me) doing a synthesis which has many steps. However, halfway through something goes wrong and you must go back to the start again, should I hand up all experimental work even the failed experiments or just the procedures for when the product was formed successfully? Which spectra do I present in my report?**

If you are synthesising complex molecules it might be advisable to include some spectra in the report and include the interpretation in the discussion. It depends on the nature of the project. For routine syntheses (literature preparations) it could be best to quote the spectra (incl. assignments) in the experimental section after the experimental procedure (see powerpoint presentation that I sent out). In addition you could show spectra in an appendix. Chemists have the tendency to report only the successful experiments. However, I find it actually very informative when unsuccessful experiments and attempts are discussed. Often you get very important information from these unsuccessful attempts and they also demonstrate that you were hard working. How detailed or whether you report unsuccessful results might also depend on how many results you have. Sometimes the page limit does simply not allow you to discuss everything.

- 8. I was just wondering if we have to count our experimental notebooks and spectra in the 30 page limit?**

No, your experimental notebooks and spectra do not count to the 30 page limit. You should hand in your notebook into the Chemistry Office in case somebody here wants to have a look at it.

- 9. Which way should the project be bound? Is there any specific way that is expected from us?**

We do not specify the type of binding but most students give us a simple plastic comb bound or wire bound report (with a transparent cover page).