COMP1205

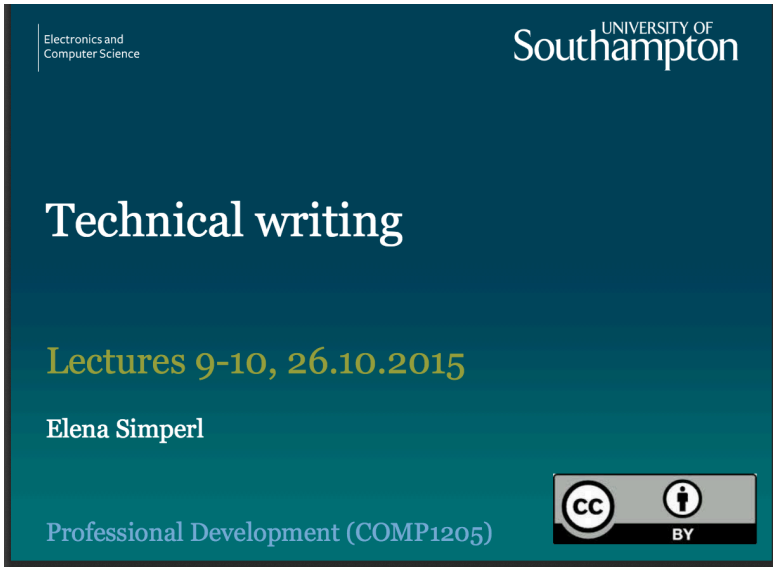
Technical Writing and Plagiarism Tutorial

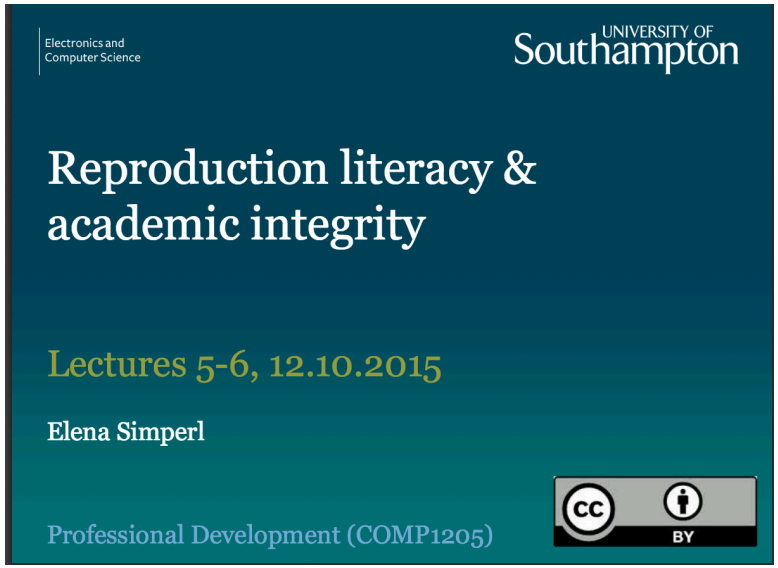
Dr. Su White

http://www.edshare.soton.ac.uk/15567/

We have had the theory…

Lets imagine the process ☺





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What do you want to learn today?

Think about how you write:

- What can you already do well which will be useful?
- Where are your weaknesses?

Based on this reflection

write down **three** things you would like to get out of the session today

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You need to learn how to…

- Organise writing clearly and logically
- Handle evidence appropriately in writing to present a structured and logical argument
- Explain concepts in formal context
- Structure your work for correctly for the appropriate audience
- Understand strategies for revision at the document, paragraph and sentence levels
- Understand grammatical and stylistic usage
- Be able to edit and refine your own written work

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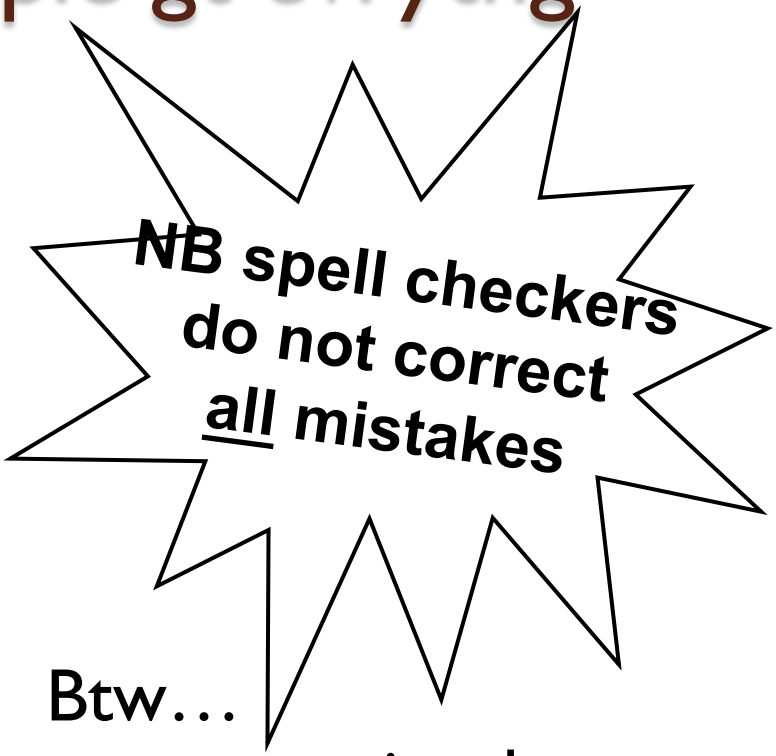
Sum wondeful peeple gt evrytng write 1st thyme



- This information/class is not for you!!
- But you may be able to help your friends and colleagues
- You may learn from helping them

Btw…
can you write down the correct version of my heading?

Think about the process and purpose of writing

Two minutes:

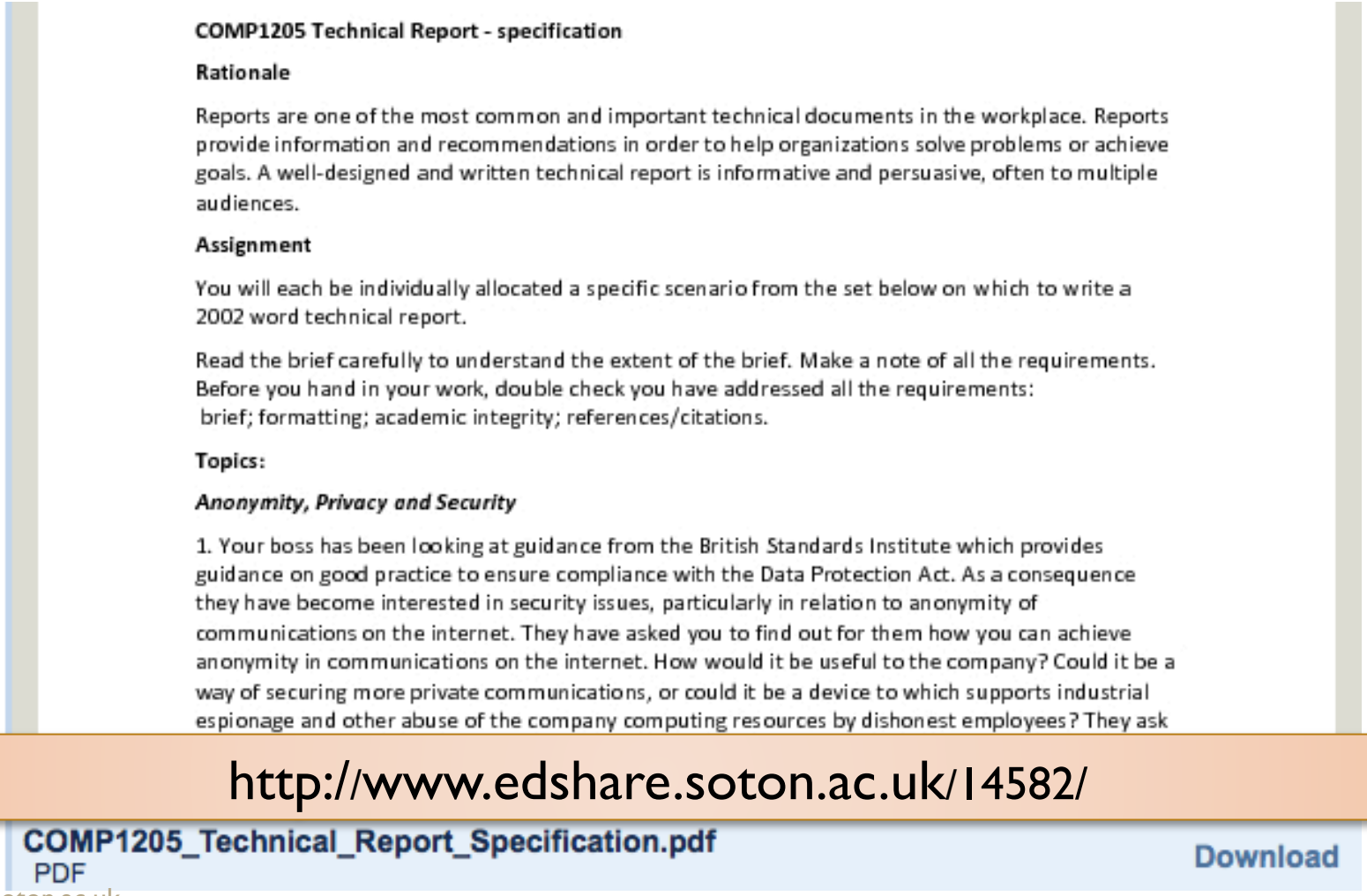
What is the purpose of

- writing the technical report
  - in this module
- writing reports
  - as part of your degree
- writing
  - in a professional context

Includes:

- Learning how to write (and practicing)
- Recording a process for 'reproduction'
- Demonstrating knowledge, skills and understanding
- Communicating scientific or technical findings/discoveries/ insights

Look at the technical report spec'



COMP1205 Technical Report - specification

Rationale

Reports are one of the most common and important technical documents in the workplace. Reports provide information and recommendations in order to help organizations solve problems or achieve goals. A well-designed and written technical report is informative and persuasive, often to multiple audiences.

Assignment

You will each be individually allocated a specific scenario from the set below on which to write a 2002 word technical report.

Read the brief carefully to understand the extent of the brief. Make a note of all the requirements. Before you hand in your work, double check you have addressed all the requirements: brief; formatting; academic integrity; references/citations.

Topics:

Anonymity, Privacy and Security

1. Your boss has been looking at guidance from the British Standards Institute which provides guidance on good practice to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act. As a consequence they have become interested in security issues, particularly in relation to anonymity of communications on the internet. They have asked you to find out for them how you can achieve anonymity in communications on the internet. How would it be useful to the company? Could it be a way of securing more private communications, or could it be a device to which supports industrial espionage and other abuse of the company computing resources by dishonest employees? They ask

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COMP1205_Technical_Report_Specification.pdf
PDF

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Look at the mark scheme

Technical Report Marking Scheme

	A 1st	B 2.1	C 2.2	D 3rd	Fail	MARK
Structure and appearance of report what the report looks like conforms to expectations/specifications	Excellent clear presentation. Strong structure of main sections, well laid out. Clear structured and logical. Good diagrams/illustrations.	Good presentation. Clear layout, some diagrams, adequately annotated. addresses topic in a logical/structured manner	Acceptable presentation. Main sections have some structure. Could do better diagrams. Not used template properly	Disorganized presentation. Unsatisfactory structure. Poor labeling of, or no diagrams. Overall lacks structure	Poor presentation. No obvious structure, difficult to work out what is where. Failed to use template.	10%
10%	7-10	6-7	5-6	4-5	0-3	
Readability how easy is it to read and understand this report	Meaning clear and fluent, originality in expression, logical progression and perfect English.	Meaning clear and logical Good English.	Meaning and text quite clear, Some faults in English	Meaning and text fairly not always clear and does not always make the point, Poor English in some places.	It was difficult to read this – perhaps because it was lacking in logical progression or the English was seriously bad.	10%
10%	7-10	6-7	5-6	4-5	0-3	
Quality of the abstract The abstract should tell me why I need to read this, what I will learn and tell me the important conclusion it must be stand-alone.	Well-written Abstract. After reading this I am quite clear why I need to read the report, what I am going to find out in the report and what the important conclusion will be. No citations in the abstract.	Good Abstract. After reading this I am mostly clear why I need to read the report, what I am going to find out in the report and what the important conclusion will be. No citations in the abstract.	Fair abstract, although after reading it I am not fully clear why I need to read the report, what I am going to find out in the report and what the important conclusion will be. The abstract is not stand-alone (e.g has citations).	An attempt at an Abstract. Fails to make it clear why I need to read the report, what I am going to find out in the report and what the important conclusion will be. May not be stand-alone – maybe too long or too short.	After reading this I am little the wiser than I was from reading the title of the report. Maybe much too long or much too short.	10%
10%	7-10	6-7	5-6	4-5	0-3	
Quality of introduction: tells me what the question is, what is the state of the art is in the area and should reference current literature.	Good introduction, covers questions raised in the set topic. Interesting/comprehensive background and state of the art, demonstrating background reading/ research.	Appropriate introduction, with fair explanation of questions the report will answer. Good coverage of state of the art and background information on the topic.	Adequate introduction, although not quite clear what question report will answer. Adequate coverage of background information.	Some attempt at an introduction; background information and rationale for the topic of the project, but not to an appropriate level.	Inadequate introduction, little if any evidence of background reading.	15%
15	10.5-15	9-10.5	7.5-9	6-7.5	0-6	
Quality and clarity of argument /enjoyability good narrative/story that ties the report together making even complex topics easier to understand.	Discussion shows depth of analysis, exploration and synthesis of information, not superficial reporting of facts.	Good narrative and discussion with some analysis and synthesis.	Discussion demonstrates basic understanding, but limited to a factual account only, with little discussion or analysis.	Superficial reporting, no demonstration of in-depth understanding of topic.	Lack of evidence that student has understood the information, with a tendency to regurgitate facts. Poor discussion.	10%
10%	7-10	6-7	5-6	4-5	0-3	
Quality of overall analysis and conclusions summarizes analyzes what has been learned in order to synthesize and address answers to the questions asked in the introduction, discuss limitations of report, possibly suggest further work.	Conclusion shows good integrations of introduction and discussions, introduces issues for further exploration. Shows awareness of limitations of report.	Relevant issues and problems identified and discussed with some analysis good summary or lessons learned. Good conclusion demonstrating curiosity. Possibly over confident in answer.	Some relevant issues are identified and discussed, shows comprehension, no significant errors or omissions, some conclusions drawn. Conclusion does not raise issues for further exploration	Superficial relevance and limited comprehension, error in judgments and misleading summary. Weak conclusion.	No more than a summary of what has already been said.	10%
15	10.5-15	9-10.5	7.5-9	6-7.5	0-6	
Quality of cited literature Ideally peer-reviewed, appropriately up-to-date, references to material which	Wide range of recent sources of literature listed using primary literature mostly from credible peer reviewed	Good range of recent literature and sources – the majority from peer reviewed and primary sources	Fair number of references although they are mostly not primary sources or peer reviewed	Few sources referenced, only basic texts on a restricted range of subjects. Many are not from peer reviewed	Limited referencing. The few that are there are simply websites and secondary sources.	

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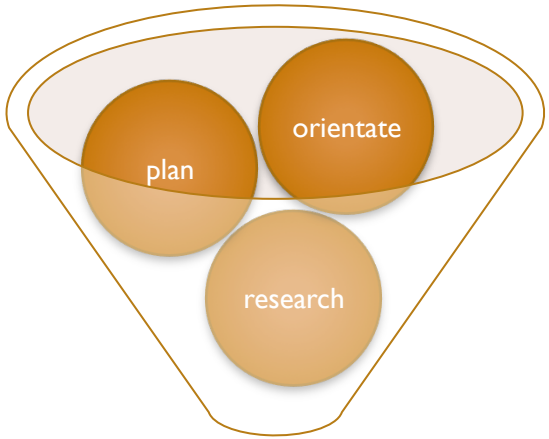
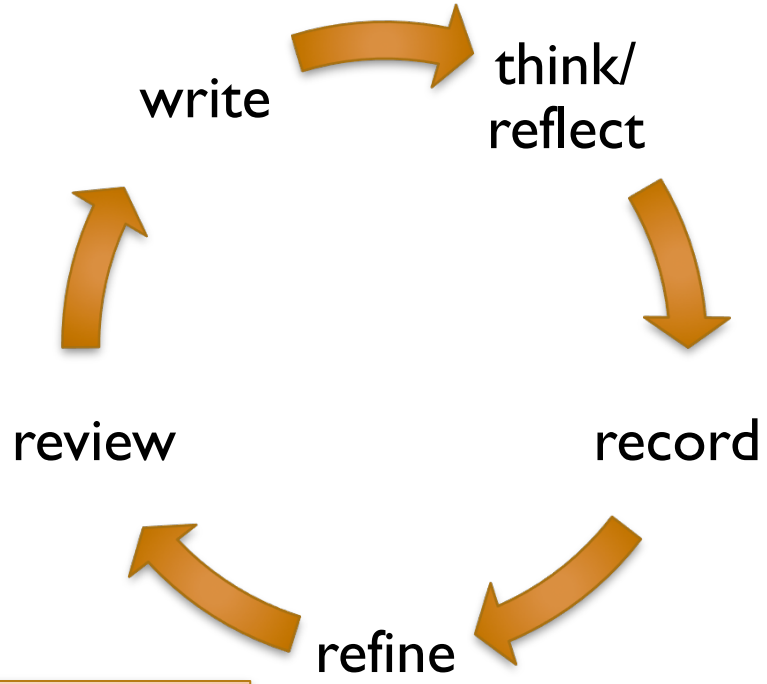
The process – and pragmatics





Your first draft will never be good enough to hand in!

Always hand in before the deadline

Before Getting Started

- You wish to communicate "What you have found out". If you didn't find anything out : STOP!

- Usually technical reports are intended to communicate new knowledge
  "I had this hypothesis and I tested it like this; here are my results and this is what we learn from them"

- BUT as a student
  you are asked to write technical reports about things that you know that the person who reads it (the marker) will already know. Don't worry – your marker is not your audience (see later) – and your task is still to express what *you* found out.

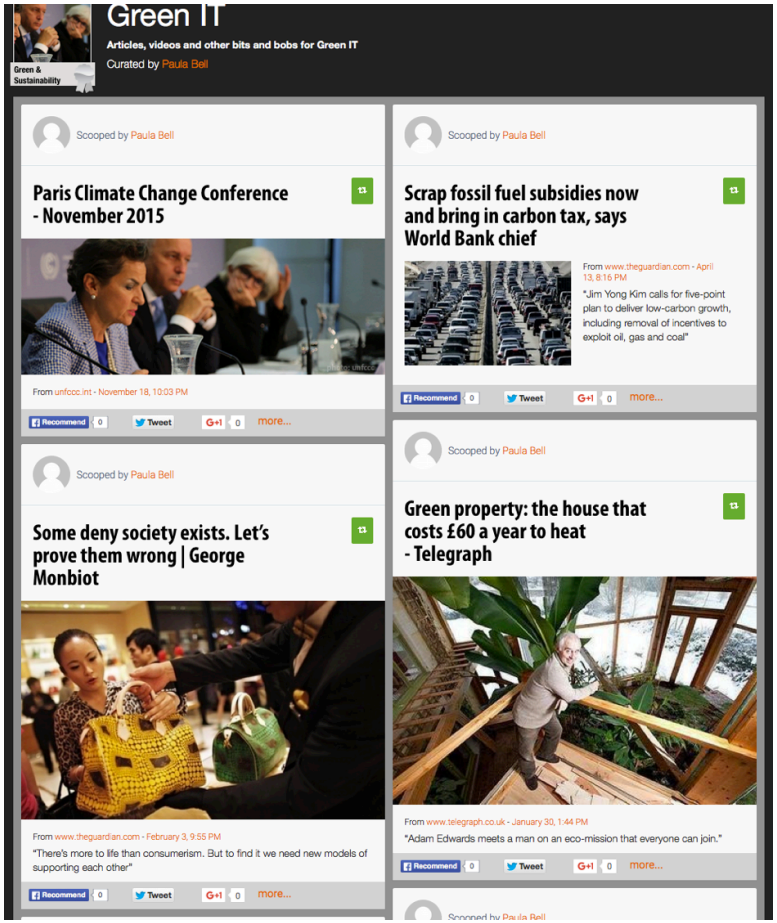
Use the process to learn about yourself

- How do you think and learn?

How can you refine what you do?:

- To work **smarter** not harder

Working collaboratively can be more fun/productive…



- But write your report individually
- Find your own words
- Select your quotes – and cite them accurately

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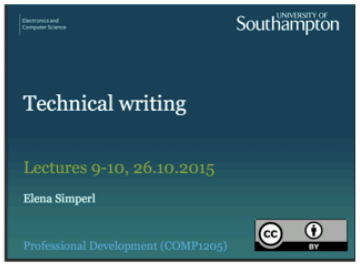
Bear in mind existing guidance



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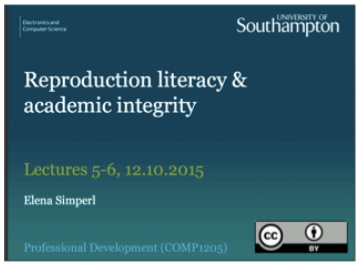

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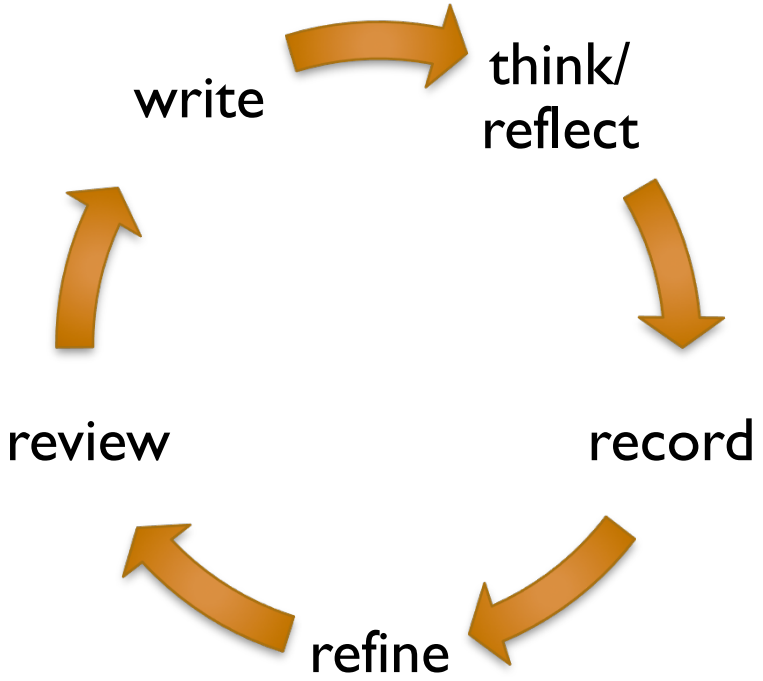
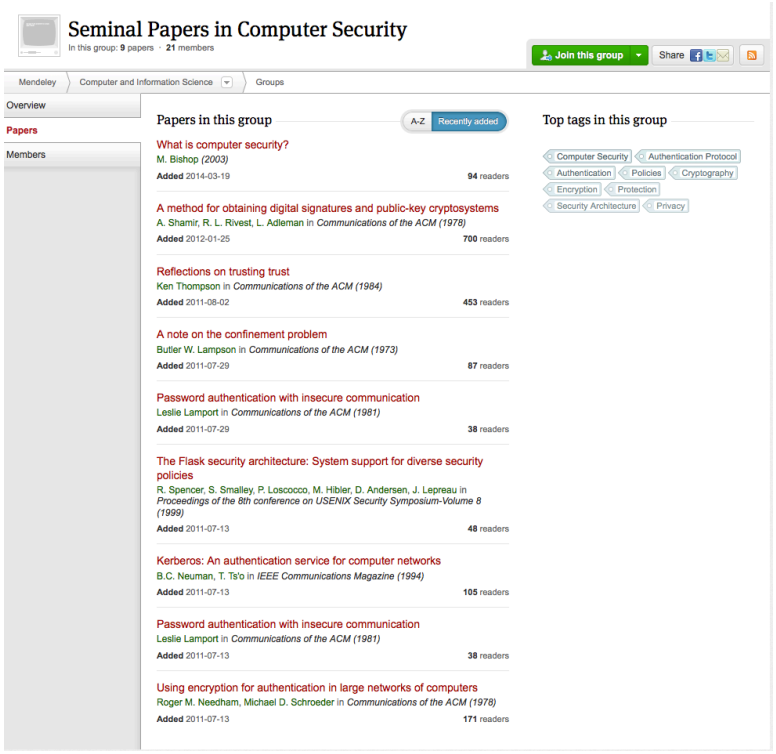


What we know about plagiarism

- People who are rushed:
  - Take shortcuts
  - May feel panicked
  - May not make good decisions
- …how to avoid it
  - Carve our enough time
  - Add a buffer for the unexpected

Think about using writing tools



Seminal Papers in Computer Security

In this group: 9 papers · 21 members

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What is computer security?
M. Bishop (2003)
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A method for obtaining digital signatures and public-key cryptosystems
A. Shamir, R. L. Rivest, L. Adleman in *Communications of the ACM (1978)*
Added 2012-01-25 — 700 readers

Reflections on trusting trust
Ken Thompson in *Communications of the ACM (1984)*
Added 2011-08-02 — 453 readers

A note on the confinement problem
Butler W. Lampson in *Communications of the ACM (1973)*
Added 2011-07-29 — 87 readers

Password authentication with insecure communication
Leslie Lamport in *Communications of the ACM (1981)*
Added 2011-07-29 — 38 readers

The Flask security architecture: System support for diverse security policies
R. Spencer, S. Smalley, P. Loscocco, M. Hibler, D. Andersen, J. Lepreau in *Proceedings of the 8th conference on USENIX Security Symposium-Volume 8 (1999)*
Added 2011-07-13 — 48 readers

Kerberos: An authentication service for computer networks
B.C. Neuman, T. Ts'o in *IEEE Communications Magazine (1994)*
Added 2011-07-13 — 105 readers

Password authentication with insecure communication
Leslie Lamport in *Communications of the ACM (1981)*
Added 2011-07-13 — 38 readers

Using encryption for authentication in large networks of computers
Roger M. Needham, Michael D. Schroeder in *Communications of the ACM (1978)*
Added 2011-07-13 — 171 readers

Top tags in this group

Computer Security | Authentication Protocol | Authentication | Policies | Cryptography | Encryption | Protection | Security Architecture | Privacy

Using Scrivener for Writing Scientific Papers

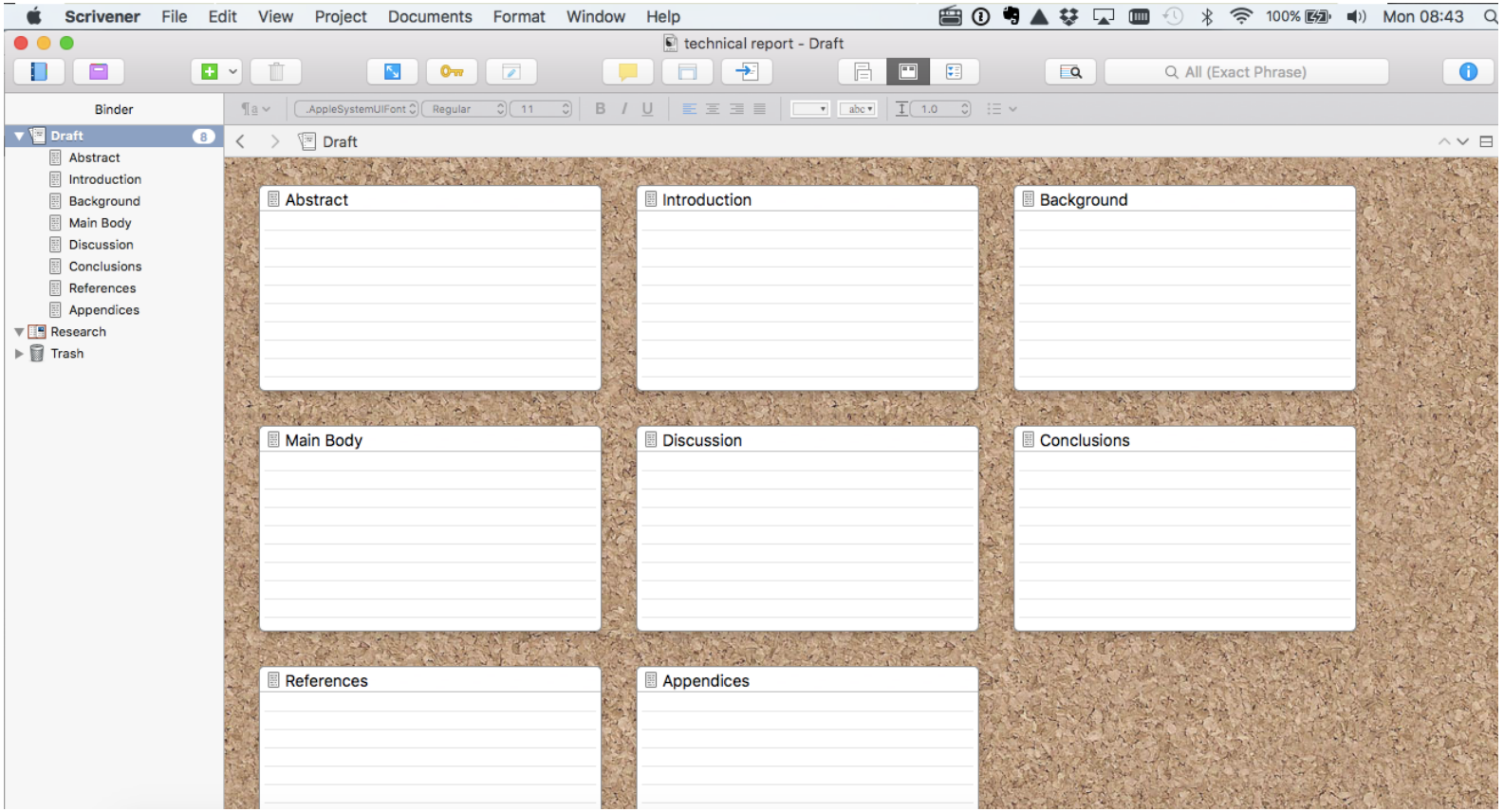
As an academic, I spend **a lot** of time writing. Switching to a Mac in 2008 was one of the best productivity hacks of my life. But there has always been this one nagging problem: Microsoft Word. I loathe Microsoft Word. Especially the Mac version.

Word has many flaws, but the most irritating is its amazing ability to hang or crash. It happens all the time, but especially when exchanging documents that have "track changes" enabled with colleagues on PCs. I still remember vividly one night when I was working on a paper that Word crashed more than 30 times.

So infuriating.

Enter Scrivener

My frustration with Word drove me to experiment with many other word processors like Pages, OpenOffice, LibreOffice, and Google Docs. Although it wasn't first on my list to try, I kept hearing rave reviews of a program called Scrivener from accomplished writers like Michael Hyatt and Jeff Goins. Scrivener isn't a word processor. It's a writing studio.



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Scrivener 2
for Mac OS X
10.11 El Capitan Ready
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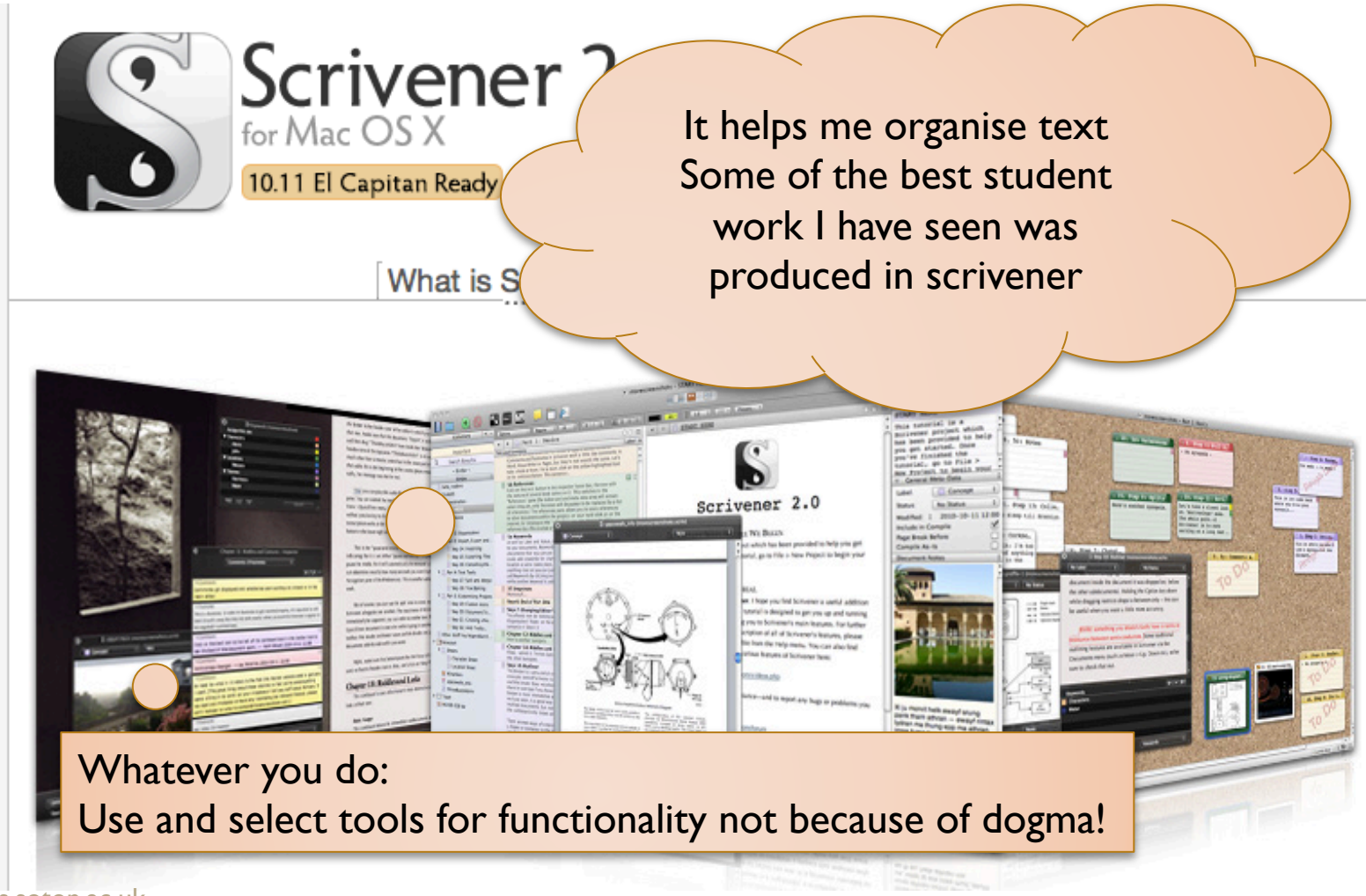
: Download for Mac
What is Scrivener?
Features
What's New
Scrivener 2.0


Scrivener 2
for Mac OS X
10.11 El Capitan Ready
What is S
It helps me organise text
Some of the best student work I have seen was produced in scrivener
Scrivener 2.0
Whatever you do:
Use and select tools for functionality not because of dogma!

Advice includes

- Set aside time for research and writing
- challenge common assumptions
- overcome procrastination
- eliminate distractions
- use a timer
- set SMART goals
- chunk your project into small tasks
- track your progress
- make yourself accountable

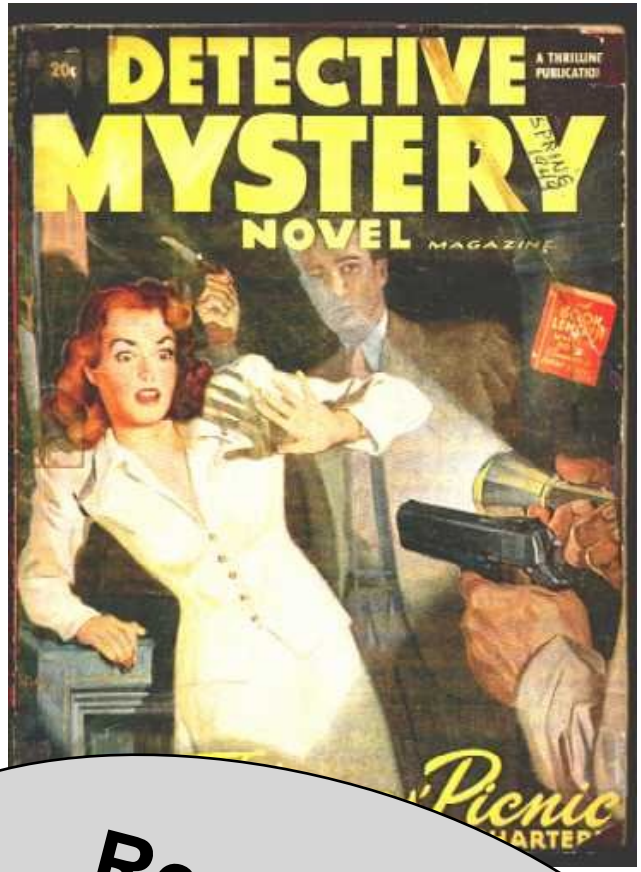
Reports are not personal

With thanks to nataliedee.com

Structure of a Technical Report

- **[Title page]**
  - name, affiliation, date, contact details, etc.
- **[Declaration]**
  - who did this work?
- **[Acknowledgement]**
  - to those who have helped or influenced your work
- **[Contents]**
  - sections, sub sections and page numbers (probably not sub sub sections)
- **Abstract**
  - stand-alone summary of report
- **Introduction**
  - provides the motivation and context and outlines other related work
- **Main technical sections**
  - theory, experimental method, results, discussion
- **Conclusions**
  - and appropriate future work
- **References**
- **[Web References]**
- **[Bibliography]**
- **[Appendices]**
  - anything which would interfere with the continuity of the main report (typically detail)

Report function



- Abstract summarises the work presented
- Introduction (provides context)
- Itemise the key work(s)
- Identify where your contribution fits
- Present key ideas, describe methods
- Present Results
- Draw Conclusions

Remember Your report is not a detective novel!

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The Abstract

- must be stand-alone
- must not contain citations
- is a concise summary – not a précis.
- **IS VERY IMPORTANT**

ABSTRACT

Although the cloud of Linked Open Data has been growing continuously for several years, little is known about the particular features of linked data usage. Motivating why it is important to understand the usage of Linked Data, we describe typical linked data usage scenarios and contrast the so derived requirement with conventional server access analysis. Then, we report on usage patterns found through an in-depth analysis of access logs of four popular LOD datasets. Eventually, based on the usage patterns we found in the analysis, we propose metrics for assessing Linked Data usage from the human and the machine perspective, taking into account different agent types and resource representations.

Use four or five sentences.

1. What is the problem, and why is it a problem?
2. What is your idea for a suggested solution?
3. How did test your idea?
4. What results did you get?
5. Why is that useful?

It's a good idea to write the abstract before you begin (even if you re-write it after you finish)

Experimental Report Abstract

Tea drinkers report major differences in their satisfaction with cups of tea, even when they have been made from the same tea leaves.

One possible cause of this variability is the temperature of the water at the time it is poured over the tea leaves.

This report describes an experiment in which one hundred tea drinkers were asked their views on teas made with water at different temperatures.

The results demonstrate a significant preference for tea made with near boiling water.

The perceived quality of tea, particularly in the USA, would be much enhanced if caterers observed this convention.

- (5 sentences, 98 words)

Work and improve over time

- Have a plan
- Do good work
- Record your work
- Analyse the results
- Capture the whole process
- Meet your deadlines

Some aspects will apply equally to:

- Every written task

Use opportunities to refine your process

these are skills for life

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Record an Audit Trail

References

- Provide an audit trail
- Acknowledge others' work
- Are concise

Should be replicable

List references

- consistently,
- correctly,
- completely

They need to be:

complete and in a standard format

They need to contain:

enough detail to locate the same source again

Do not include:

ISBN

Library call numbers

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Work smarter not harder

One touch

- Write your bibliography as you go
- Always get full references
- Record how and when
- Collect to a standard format

Information needed

- Gather information before *and* during writing
- Begin to organise information as you obtain it
- Information from others:
  record full bibliographic details
- Information you generate:
  keep a complete logbook record

Keep track of your sources

Avoid plagiarism

With notes, copies of articles, useful diagrams, etc.,

NB

- Authors, complete name of work, editors if any, publisher, year/month of publication, volume no., page numbers
- URL plus any clues as to original paper source.
- If class notes, is there a printed textbook?
- If a self-contained paper, look for any and all clues to find the original citation (e.g. author's publication list on Web page).