Technical and research report style guide

Read this guide and refer to it as you write your report. It is organised by report section.

Overal content	
Page size	A4
Page layout	Include a running header with your name and ecs user id (e.g Frederica Savonarola fs918g)
	Include a running footer with title of the report and the current page number
Margins	Margins of 1 inch (2.54cm) on every side is reasonable.
Font	Use Sans Serif fonts, no smaller than 10 point
	I suggest you use 11 or 12 point for the body text and 10 point for references
Line spacing	1.5 line spacing
Numbers	Normally, numbers up to ten should be spelt out in full.
	Numbers above ten are shown as the figure for that number. However, any number beginning a sentence is spelt out in full.
	Numbers which act as an index within the titles to figures and tables are shown in figure format e.g. Figure 1.1 Conceptual framework for the proposed research
Citations	Citations should be made in Harvard style i.e. (name(s), date). Book references should include page numbers. Single pages will be referred by p <page number>, page ranges by pp <range of pages>
Other references	References to any items which will appear in the appendices are detailed in Other, below
Front matter	
Title	Try to keep the title succinct and ensure that it can be understood in its own right
Abstract	No more than 500 words. There are no citations in the abstract
Keywords	Alphabetic list separated by commas
Table of contents	List all section and sub section headings and their page numbers
List of figures and tables	List the titles of each figure (graphs or diagrams) and table with their page number
Body text	
Abbreviations	Except for standard abbreviations such as e.g, i.e and cf, use the full form of the phrase at the first use with abbreviations in brackets immediately following - subsequently use the abbreviation. Use abbreviations sparingly to ensure that they do not make the overall text hard to read
Figure titles	Figure titles appear below the figure
Figures and tables - numbering	Number figures and tables in simple sequence inside each major section of the document- so you will end up with numbering in sequence by section e.g.
	1.1, 1.2….
	2.1, 2.2, 2.3…
	3.1, 3.2, ….
	And so on for each section
Title content figures & tables	Titles should be meaningful so they can be understood out of context. A figure or diagram which reproduces something by another author should cite the source in the title
Table titles	Are positioned above the table

Tables	Keep tables on a single page i.e. do not split a table over a page break unless the table really is so long that it runs to more than one A4 page. In that case, you will need to have repeating header rows. If you find you have a table which is overlarge first review and revise the table contents and layout to see if it will actually fit on one page. Even if the requirement is for the text to be 1.5 or double spaced, text in tables can be single spaced. In your tables use a font which is a distinctively different font from the font used in body of the text
Quoted text	When using block quotes for paragraphs indent them on either side and put the source right justified and similarly indented on a following line
References	References need to be listed in Harvard format sorted into alphabetic order. Always list all authors of multiple papers. Remember that the purpose of the reference list should be to enable the reader to retrieve the document easily and precisely. Make sure that references are definitive. If you include details of the web site source of the citation, you need to provide details of the date on which the information was accessed. For detailed information on citations and referencing please refer to the University of Southampton Library pages http://library.soton.ac.uk/sash/referencing Commonly seen mistakes include citing a web page when a journal article exists, omitting page numbers, including weird capitalisation of abbreviations because of the settings of a reference manager.
Footnotes	Use footnotes sparingly. If you refer to a web page generically then including a footnote with the web site address may be appropriate. For example text which reads "further information on GPDR is available from the information commissioner's office" could include a footnote to the website for the Information commissioner's office
Optional sections	
Further reading/ Bibliography	Include in this list, in Harvard format, all references which were used, but not cited. For example you may have consulted generic texts at the orientation stage which enabled you to progress, but for which there was no opportunity to cite
Appendices	Typically factual material (such as survey questions, program code, ethical approval forms) which are necessary references for the text but are not part of the main narrative. Each appendix must be labeled with a letter (A, B, C, etc.) according to where it appears in the paper. Thus the first appendix referred to in the paper will be named Appendix A. The second appendix will be named Appendix B. If there is only one appendix, it is just called Appendix. Each appendix must have a title. Start each appendix on a separate page. Place the label and title of each appendix at the top of the page, label first, title second.

General advice

Use online grammar and style checkers to review your text.

Reading aloud is a helpful way of spotting typographic errors.

Listening to text to voice can also help.

Check against the marking guide to make sure you put effort where you will get marks