

Written Component: additional advice

Note: to get the most out of this, it will help to have your guide with you.

Firstly, be aware that the draft copy of your Written Component *most likely* will be the only copy your supervisor will read and give feedback and suggestions for; therefore, if you don't extend yourself (i.e. if you don't put a lot of effort into it), or stop at 3000 words even if you're not at the end of your journey thus far, you will not be able to get the most out of any feedback you will receive from your supervisor. Supervisors should not give any further advice after the first draft, unless in special circumstances.

Secondly, make sure you read the section in the Project Guide (roughly pages 13-15) that gives an overview of what is required – especially the list of dot-point requirements.

THEN – go to Appendix A – this gives more specific information about the Written Component.

Note: In the draft copy of your Written Component – it is your choice how much you want to focus on the content/pages that come before the Introduction and Main Text (e.g. history and context, title pages, contents, acknowledgements, etc.) – **if you do choose to write these in your draft – then you can get feedback on it – and it's less work to do in Term 4. If you DON'T – then it's more work you'll have to do, possibly at last moment – and from my experience – people make mistakes in these areas, so...**

BREAKDOWN OF THE DIFFERENT PARTS

Abstract: The Abstract is an overview of your whole project/written component (handy to write it last, once WC finished) – **it should be written in 3rd person, using formal language. Don't neglect the major questions and complications that arose and how they were solved.**

The Challenge: to write this in 3rd person, when you've written the main text in 1st person – *challenging, but it definitely can be done...*

Acknowledgements: these should be heartfelt, personal, authentic, and where possible, avoiding clichés. Aim for heartfelt but to-the-point. Self-

reflection/personal learning marks can be gained from good acknowledgements.

Contents: ask Tricia (or someone else; google it) how to do them **properly** – this will save you much time and potential headaches (there is an automated Contents function in MS Word and other word processors).

H&C: any questions? **Listen to the feedback from supervisors closely...**

Introduction: *like a good book...*

A good introduction will set up the plotline of your narrative:

- introduce the main character (yourself), with perhaps some relevant personal history that may have led to you choosing your project (in some cases – anecdotes from your life can work very well) e.g. “ever since I was a little girl...”
- give insights into your main character (who you were at the start of the year, and before) – this can allow you to set-up character development over your journey.
- Perhaps even a good hook, or some foreshadowing, of things to come...
- And give some **theoretical** introduction to your project using relevant metalanguage... (briefly talk about any theory behind what you’ve learned using the language you’ve learned).

This will allow you to address the 3 main strands that you are marked on:

1. The journey/narrative – every journey needs a beginning, and if you can engage your reader from the outset, then it will help to narrate a captivating narrative.
2. Personal reflection: by introducing yourself and giving a personal picture – you begin the process of self-reflection.
3. Technical learning: using metalanguage to introduce your project will help set a tone and register of professional competency in what you have learned.

MAIN BODY

How you choose to structure your main body is up to you.

Some/many prefer to just tell a straight, linear narrative – and for some projects this works well.

For other Projects, especially ones that have overlapping components

(e.g.... Making Garments & Developing a Business Model) – you might want to structure your Body into the different components of your project.

Sub-headings highly recommended - they help to give coherence to what you're writing about in each section, and help to limit digressions, waffling or focusing on one part for too long.

Don't forget paragraphing! Make sure each paragraph has a thread or topic or idea that is developed. Avoid huge paragraphs. Sometimes short – one sentence paragraphs can be good for impact and constructing your narrative.

SELF-REFLECTION – ultimately, will build a picture of how you understand how you've changed over the course of the year (you have, believe me). If you can build on the picture of yourself in your Introduction, all the way through to your Conclusion = **ideal**

Self-reflections are not a negative thing – they're an empowering thing. Make sure to give insights into the positives you have learned about yourself, not just things that changed, or developed, or that might need continued development.

Advice: when you self-reflect – ask yourself, *why* , and then *why again* (*and why again if need be*) until you reach an answer that satisfies you.

Warning: Do NOT feel the need to disclose any personal or private information about yourself; this is not the point. The point is to better understand yourself; if you can be honest with yourself and understand yourself, then your self-reflections will be genuine, authentic and empowering.

Use your personal journal – if you've been writing self-reflections as you go, you will have lots of content upon which to draw – **BUT – now that you have some hindsight – you may be able to go deeper into the roots and causes of your previous experiences.**

Self-reflections can also involve your interactions with others, and what you learn about other people too (the two are inextricably linked).

OFTEN, a good place for self-reflection can be at the end of sections/sub-headings; OR – whenever there are highs and lows in your journey.

The Journey/Narrative

- Try to bring out the HIGHS and the LOWS of your year.
- Tell stories! Choose several key moments, highs, lows, interesting adventures or experiences, **and write them using the language of story** – set the scene (descriptive writing), give insights into the protagonist (either through narration or symbolism), create tension, withhold the ‘reveal’ to enhance climax, etc.
- Why not leave some hooks?– say, at the ends of Sections/Sub-headings – that will be resolved later.
- Remember that story and self-reflection should work together.

Technical learning:

This is where you provide ‘proof’ of your learning. It often involves describing the processes of things you did, demonstrating a development of skills and understanding.

Think: if I were to show this to someone who has no idea about the Project, or about me, how can I show them how much I have learned throughout the year?

Using the technical language relevant to your field is important in conveying your learning.

It can be a good idea to throw some **references/citations** in the **main text**; while this is expected for more theoretical based project, it is not a requirement for all Projects. However, if you can use references in the body of your text, it’s only going to help meet that criterion.

Using photographs can be a **very effective** way of saving you lots of words in describing *what* you did, leaving more words to *explain what you learned* through the process of what you did.

OVERALL – you need to find a balance between telling your story in an engaging way; self-reflection and technical learning.

Bearing in mind that there will be more ‘words’ spent on technical learning than self-reflections – and the journey also will (most likely) be more than the self-reflections. But they each carry equal weighting in the

marking...

WRITING & LANGUAGE:

- Don't be confused by 'your voice' – it does NOT mean how you talk in verbal conversation, as this very well may not be appropriate. However, it may include some unique idioms/expressions/metaphors that you like to use...
- The idea is for the language to be as **expressive** as you can – try to write with some flair -
in fact – the whole 'your voice' thing is a bit misleading – as we want you to try and write as expressively as you can, using words and phrases that are interesting, but that are also true to who you are (e.g. don't create a persona of a posh English nobleman and then write with their voice, because it might sound flamboyant and expressive).
- **FINAL COPY** – make sure you get your heads around syntax – know when to use a comma vs a full-stop (or even better, semi-colon) – each one of your errors will be counted, and over 5000 words if you don't pay attention to this – it can add up. I have explained this many times, and always correct them on all of your assessed work – so if you haven't been able to get your head around this – **now is the time**. If in doubt, ask!

NOTE: Please be aware – that when you write your Final Copy next term – you will have even more insights to give – so make sure you read carefully over it all – not just to fix the language – but the content, and to go deeper wherever you can.

FINALLY – Have some fun with it! It's not every day you get the chance/time to write your very own memoir – and it should be a celebration of you and who you are.

ANY QUESTIONS:

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or your supervisor.

Jake, on behalf of your network of support: the Upper School Supervisors & staff.