



## Introduction

Welcome to the World Bank Group course Report Writing.

The overall goal of Report Writing is to help staff write WBG reports that help decision makers take appropriate action.

In this course, you will be planning and writing substantial parts of a report for your work. You will be working on this report all the way from the initial planning phase to the final revising phase. You will be working on an authentic report, not something made up. In this way, you will be applying the skills learned in the course to improve your writing.

Throughout the course, you will explore principles and strategies of effective writing for the Bank Group's written communication needs. Your work will consist of a number of readings and self-marked activities followed by a module assignment that you will submit to your course tutor for review.

As you complete this course, you will be using sample documents from the World Bank Group. These documents are all available in PDF format in the Resources and Documents section of each module.

You will have a personal tutor to help you throughout the course. In addition to helping you with any problems with learning materials and learning approaches, your tutor will assess your assignments and give you detailed, individualized feedback.

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### QUOTE



*"Clear writing is a window into clear thinking."*  
—Robert B. Zoellick, Former President of the World Bank Group

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## Course Outcomes

By the time you complete this course, you will have demonstrated that you can do the following:

- Plan a substantial new report by using a pyramid outline.
- Create sections with headings and build your paragraphs using your pyramid plan to guide the reader.
- Produce and revise a section of your new report, using your plan:
  - Include or revise the headings planned.
  - Write paragraphs, using effective topic sentences, connectors, transitions, and parallelism.
  - Revise your section for structure, clarity, and conciseness.
- Identify your own main areas for improvement in writing effective WBG reports in English.

In addition, each module includes detailed learning objectives that support your overall goal of writing WBG reports that help decision makers take action.



## Course Outline

Report Writing is organized into six modules (plus a short Next Steps section to help you plan later tutorials). You can see the tabs for all modules at the top of every page.

You should work through these six modules in sequence because they replicate the process of report writing. Below is an estimate of the amount of time it will take to complete each module. You may find that you need more time to revise assignments based on your tutor's feedback.

### **Module 1: Writing Effectively at The World Bank Group (2-3 hours)**

This module is designed to get you thinking about writing at the World Bank Group. It will help you assess your current writing skills and establish your expectations for the course. Through examples and activities, you will consider the idea of effective writing in the World Bank Group context.

### **Module 2: Starting Off Right With Planning (4-6 hours)**

In this module, you will consider appropriate strategies for writing reports at the World Bank Group. You will employ a technique called the Dialogue with the Reader to get yourself thinking about a report that you would like to write.

### **Module 3: Organizing Your Report: The Pyramid Outline (4-6 hours)**

This module introduces you to the concept of the pyramid outline as a way of organizing your ideas and information in a way that serves your purpose and is reader friendly. Developing a coherent and well-organized pyramid outline is critical to planning an effective report.

### **Module 4: Guiding the Reader: Introductions and Headings (2-4 hours)**

This module focuses on introductions and headings, which are essential for making your report reader-friendly. Through analysis of examples and practice activities, you will be able to compose an introduction for your report and begin creating a structure for your text using headings.

### **Module 5: Drafting Your Report (3-5 hours)**

In this module, you will work on the actual writing of your report. You will have the opportunity to examine and critique different styles of paragraphs and sentences, and you will try your hand at composing your own.

### **Module 6: Improving Your Report (6-8 hours)**

This module helps you to review your work in order to refine your writing. You will focus on the style and mechanics of English-language writing, and you will develop techniques for critically reading and revising your work.

### **Total: 21-32 hours, plus time for assignment revision**

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*Note: The time required to complete each module may vary depending on learners' capacities to work on the course.*



## **Features of the Study Materials**

This CD-ROM aims to challenge you with relevant, Bank Group-focused information about report writing that is designed to improve your professional writing skills. It encourages you to reflect on your current work-related writing practices and to help you approach them more effectively.

### **Learning Objectives**

At the beginning of each module, we present you with some specific learning objectives, detailing what we expect you to get out of the module. The objectives are not all-encompassing. You will also have your own goals that you set out in Module 1, as well as specific objectives for each module. Once you have completed each module, we encourage you to revisit your overall goals and specific objectives to reflect on whether you have achieved them.

### **Activities**

Many of the pages on this CD-ROM are interactive, providing examples, exercises, quizzes, activities, etc. These activities give you the chance to think about the topics you have been reading about, to give personal responses to the material, test your knowledge, and analyze case material. In most cases, you can simply enter your answers right on the screen. You should not send your responses to these activities to your tutor. (Send only completed assignments to your tutor.) For each of these activities, you will be able to compare your answers with those that we have provided as model answers.

The activities form a key element of the teaching in these modules, so you should not skip them. Make a commitment to completing the activities, and you will be able to improve your writing skills through this course.

## Background Readings

Supplementary material appears on this CD-ROM in the form of [Background Readings](#). Please read this material—in print or onscreen—at your own pace to reinforce course content.



## Assessment: How to Pass the Course

The activities discussed above will provide you with a measure of self-assessment for your progress through the course. In addition, you will receive a formal assessment of your assignments from your tutor.

By working through the course, you will plan an entire report that you need to write for your work and write substantial parts of it. The topic of the report is up to you. You should have something in mind before you begin the course. You can use the course and the assignments to help you plan, draft, and revise your report. The course assignments are structured so that you can work on your report in separate stages.

At the end of each module, you will submit an assignment to your tutor by uploading it in the assignment section in [Moodle](#). Your tutor will review the assignment and provide detailed written feedback on the quality of your work and give you advice on any areas needing improvement. Your tutor will then upload your assignment with his or her comments in the same place. You can retrieve the comments and check the status of the assignment there.

To complete the course, you must submit all assignments, meeting the performance criteria for each assignment. Your tutor will inform you that you have successfully completed assignments and the course. At that time, you may explore options for further development, including [taking individual tutorials](#).



## Scheduling Your Study

As with any distance-learning course, you have considerable autonomy in the way you organize your method of study. You can study wherever and whenever you choose and at whatever pace suits you best within the four-month time frame of the course.

Remember when you are scheduling your study that the time required for the modules is not equal. You will likely complete the first module very quickly. Later modules take considerably more time. To receive the maximum benefit from this course, you will want to be sure your assignment submission schedule allows time for your tutor to give you feedback, and to ask for revisions on your work if necessary.

### Inform Your Supervisor

You should inform your supervisor that you are taking this course and try to gain support for the duration of your studies. If possible, try to organize some regular time away from your work station to work on the course.

### Work out a Schedule

The entire course requires up to 35 hours of study time. More time may be required for assignment revisions. Completion times are bound to vary from learner to learner.

With distance learning, you are responsible for being organized so that you can complete the course in an appropriate time frame. You will need to schedule your study time carefully so that you can do the activities, make your own notes, and complete the assignments.

### Set Your own Assignment Submission Dates

Although there are no set dates for submitting assignments, we strongly advise you to plan a schedule for assignment submission in advance. Note that learning is cumulative: you will need time to incorporate feedback from one assignment into the next.

Your tutor will ask you for your proposed dates for assignment submission early in the course. Use the [Study & Assignment Submission Schedule](#) to plan your submission dates. Send your proposed schedule to your tutor by Moodle e-mail as an attachment. It is printable, so if you wish you can post it in your work space as a reminder.

### Assignments

You will find complete descriptions of assignment requirements in each module. This summary will help you schedule your study and assignment submissions. You will find instructions or templates for these assignments in the assignment requirements section of each module.

- Assignment 1: Compose your personal goals and describe your report topic.
- Assignment 2: Complete a Dialogue with the Reader worksheet for your report.
- Assignment 3: Develop a pyramid outline for your report.
- Assignment 4: Write the introduction for your report, and create headings and subheadings.
- Assignment 5: Write one section (1-3 pages) of your report.
- Assignment 6: Revise the report section you submitted for Assignment 5 or write a 5-10 page section of your report.

### **Time Limit**

There is a time limit of sixteen weeks to complete this course. The course administrator will provide a list of critical dates for the cohort in which you are participating. The key dates are also available in the Resources section of Moodle.



## **Support and Contacts**

Although the course materials are designed to enable you to work alone, sometimes you will need help. A support system has been developed to assist you and your fellow World Bank Group course participants with any difficulties that you may experience.

### **Course Content**

If your problem concerns understanding the course learning materials, how to proceed in the course, or about the assignment requirements, you should contact your tutor by [Moodle e-mail](#). Your tutor is there to help you find your way through the learning materials and will understand how you are feeling. Please do not hesitate to ask questions, even if you think the question is too simple to ask.

Your tutor will contact you early in the course. Please reply promptly by Moodle e-mail so that he or she knows you are in contact.

If your tutor contacted you before you received this CD-ROM, now is a good time to let your tutor know that you have received your course materials and are ready to start the course.

Occasionally, you will see an e-mail link for your tutor like the one above. You will notice that there is no e-mail address provided. That is because there are different tutors for this course. However, the link will automatically open to the [Moodle](#) website in your internet browser. You will log into Moodle and email your tutor from there.

### **Course Administration**

You may experience administrative problems that require attention, such as changes in your work schedule or inability to access course materials. For assistance, contact the Commonwealth of Learning "Learner Support" listed in Contacts in [Moodle email](#). For technical problems, we strongly recommend that you contact your local technical support.



## **Navigating Through This Course**

This online course has been constructed in a way that allows you to work through activities at your own pace, while also having the benefit of support from an online tutor. To help you with using the course, we have adopted some conventions that should make your learning journey easy to navigate.

### **The Top Menu**

Every page has a menu at the top to navigate to the modules in the course.





1. Click on a **Tab** to open that module.
2. The **active module** (the module you are in) will appear with the color bar extended below the module tab.

### The Right Navigation Menu

In addition to the above, each module has a menu on the right for navigating within that module and accessing the search tool and printable pages.

3. **Next / Previous.** Clicking on the **next** or **previous** buttons will take you to those pages in the module.
4. **Print.** The **print** button will open a printable version of the module (pdf format).
5. **Site Map.** The **site map** button will open a site map showing all pages in the course.
6. **Search.** Click on the **Search** button to search for specific text within the course.
7. **Sections.** Click on a **section link** to go to the first page of that section, and expand the section menu so that you can see the pages within.
8. **Active Page.** The **active page** (the page you are on) will appear with the menu link in red text.
9. **Page Links.** Clicking on any of the **page links** will take you to that page.

### Tips for Searching

Use these tips to make searching easier.

- Enter multiple terms with a space between them. The search tool searches for any instance of each term in the list.
- Enter terms in any combination of upper and lower case. Search terms are not case sensitive.
- Include any of the following characters in your search terms: **A-Z a-z 0-9 \_ - ' , \$ %**.
- Place a plus sign (+) in front of each word that must appear in the results. For example, if you enter **+briefing +notes +record**, the search tool will find all pages that have all three words in them. Note that the three words may not necessarily be adjacent to each other, but they will be in the same page.
- Place a minus sign (-) in front of words that you do not want to appear in the results. For example, if you enter **+briefing +notes -record**, the search tool will find all pages that have the words "briefing" and "notes" but not "record."
- Exclude common words (**a, an, the**, etc.) from your search terms; these words are not part of the search index.

### Storing Files

Each module has three different kinds of activities.

- **Interactive activities** where you complete a task within the course module using your web browser. You can complete these activities as many times as you like. They are not saved.

- **Reflection File activities**, where you complete a task in preparation for your module assignment. These activities must be saved on your computer.
- **Module assignments**, which you complete when you have worked through the module. The module assignments must be saved and submitted to your tutor via the assignment submission section of [Moodle](#).

For Reflection File activities and module assignments, you will need to save your work somewhere safe. We recommend that, for each module, you create new folders in your personal folder system, one labeled *Reflections* and one labeled *Assignments*. You can then store all of your work as you progress through the module. Remember to save the assignments with tutor comments for future reference from Moodle to your computer's hard drive.



## Moodle: The Virtual Learning Environment

You and your tutor will communicate with each other through the online course environment called Moodle. Go to <http://www.col-vle.org>, log in, and use the e-mail function to contact your tutor. (You will have been provided a temporary password to this site via regular e-mail by the Commonwealth of Learning administration.)

This is also the area where you will submit all your assignments. Your tutor will review your assignments and return them here as well. Remember to take some time to familiarize yourself with this environment.

A few related guides for working in Moodle are provided here:

- [Mastering MOODLE](#)
- [MOODLE Information Sheet](#)
- [Guide to uploading your Assignment on MOODLE](#).

These Guides are also available in the Resources Section of Moodle. Please refer to them whenever necessary.

If you still have questions, please consult your personal tutor via email in Moodle, which is at <http://www.col-vle.org>.



## Technical Requirements

This course is designed to work on all Bank Group ED5 desktops. If you are using another computer, you'll need the following:

- A World Wide Web browser (Internet Explorer 5 or greater, or Mozilla Firefox version 6 or greater), with Javascript enabled
- Adobe Flash Player
- Adobe Acrobat Reader
- Screen size setting of 1024 x 768 pixels recommended.

If you have technical difficulties, please check first with your local IT specialist before contacting COL.

### Installing Adobe Flash Player and Adobe Reader

If you are using an ED5 desktop and cannot view the flash activities or PDF documents, you will have to contact your IT department to upgrade **Adobe Flash Player** and **Adobe Reader** on your computer.

If you are using a computer other than an ED5 desktop, you may need to install **Adobe Flash Player** and **Adobe Reader**. There is no need to worry about this—it is a very simple process that can easily be accomplished by following the instructions on the download pages at the Adobe web site.



# Acknowledgments

## Commonwealth of Learning

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) is the only international intergovernmental agency that focuses exclusively on using technology to expand the scope and scale of human learning. It operates on the premise that knowledge is the key to individual freedom and to cultural, social, and economic development.

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The Chairman of the Board of Governors is His Excellency, the Honourable Burchell Whiteman, O.J. Jamaican High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, and COL's President and Chief Executive Officer is Professor Asha Kanwar. The project manager for *Report Writing* is Ms. Angela Kwan, COL Learning Manager, International Organizations.

[www.col.org](http://www.col.org)

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