

ECE 4820 Senior Design Final Report Guidelines for Style, Grammar, and Convention

1. Review use of the articles “a” and “the”. Note that “the” requires the author to provide prior knowledge of the object that “the” refers to [1, see pg. 91]. For example the statement, “**The** DS89C420 micro-controller was used”, requires the author to introduce and discuss this micro-controller at some point earlier in the report with a sentence such as “A DS89C420 micro-controller was selected for the following reasons:”.

2. Review use of 1st, 2nd, 3rd person and active verses passive voice. The passive voice is generally preferred for technical reports. Good reasons for this are found in [1, pp. 91-92]. Avoid the use of “I”, “we” and “our” in technical reports. For example, replace the first person active voice phrase “We measured the field strength” with the passive voice phrase “The field strength was measured”.

3. Figures in documents

- a. Location. Place **AFTER** but **NEAR** the first reference to the figure in the text.
- b. **DO NOT** include figures that are **NOT** referred to in the text.
- c. Number figures with Arabic (e.g. 1, 2, and 3...) numerals, e.g. **Figure 1**. and refer to them in sequence in the text.
- d. Refer to the figure in the text as **Figure 23**, or **Fig. 23**, i.e. capitalize “F”.
- e. Label the figure with the label “Figure 23”, or “Fig. 23”.
- f. Give each figure a caption; e.g. “Block diagram of power supply”.

4. Tables in documents

- a. Location: Place **AFTER** but **NEAR** first reference to the table in the text.
- b. **DO NOT** include tables that are **NOT** referred to in the text.
- c. Number tables with **ROMAN NUMERALS**, i.e., I, II, III, IV...
- d. In the text, refer to the tables as “Table II”, i.e, capitalize “T”
- e. Label the table with the words “Table II” and include a caption in the label e.g.
“Table II. Safety factors for different flywheel materials”

5. Appendices

- a. Location: After the last page of the text of the document.
- b. **DO NOT** include an appendix if there is no reference to it in the text.
- c. “Number” the appendices **ALPHABETICALLY**, e.g. Appendix A, Appendix B.
- d. Number appendix pages as A1, A2, ... B1, B2...C1, C2...
- e. Number appendix figures and tables as “Figure A 1”, “Table C III”, etc.
- f. Don’t use appendices as “padding” to increase the thickness of the document.

References

1. Engineering Report Writing, John Fiske Brown, United Western Press, revised 3rd edition, 1989. Available for checkout in the ECE office.