Guidelines for Confirmation review report for students and supervisors 2017

This document is give some general guidelines about what is expected in the report, as a basis for agreement between the student and supervisor.

Previously the confirmation review report was completed between 12 and 14 months. It is therefore expected that the level of progress/ amount of data in the new report will be less than in previous years (probably around 75%) It is important for student, supervisor and independent advisor to appreciate this. However the introduction which will incorporate the “old” literature review should be of a similar length.

The report should clearly demonstrate that the student has a good grasp of the project’s aims, the literature in the relevant area and good general knowledge in the broader area of the subject, be it chemistry, biology, materials etc. It should also be clear that the student is making progress towards the project aims and has a clear plan for both the short and long term.

Some general guidelines for preparing the report are given below.

The report should be double-spaced single sided. With Arial font 12 this is about 300 words per page.

Based on previous reports for the confirmation review, as a general guideline your submitted report should be around 62 pages with the length of the introduction being around 27 pages. A maximum of 13000 words double-spaced text is recommended.

Sections to include:

Abstract: A succinct description of the work undertaken up to a maximum of 200 words. It should be self-contained and not include any references.

Introduction: that covers background, relevant literature to project (around 5000-6000 words) followed by a clear description of the aims (around 500-1000 words). Results and discussion (around 3000 words), conclusions and future work (around 500-1000 words), experimental (around 3000 for experimental projects – may be much less for theoretical projects).

References: Typically 60-100
Mendeley (https://www.mendeley.com) is a useful way to keep your references and will format them in a variety of styles for your report. It is free to download and will link pdfs of paper to your library. Endnote is also useful and available through cics, but Mendeley seems to be far more user friendly.

The reference style you choose is up to you and your supervisor (perhaps of a specific journal) but make sure your style is consistent. Each journal has a description of how to write the references, but using a database like Mendeley will allow the references to be listed in the style of whichever journal you choose.

Figures: Figures that have structures should use chemdraw. Most journals provide useful templates for this. Copyrighted figures must as a minimum be referenced. Be aware that if you are using copyrighted figures you are expected to seek permission of the author/owner. This is particularly relevant when submitting your final thesis at the end of your PhD when it will be available to the public via the White Rose Resource.