

How (not) to write a good project brief?

✓ some tips on how to do it ✗ examples of what to avoid

Supervisory team

- ✓ **Chair and mentor both qualify.** If they are from the same section: explain why. Avoid potential conflict of interest between chair and mentor (i.e. staff member and his section leader)
- ✗ More than one external mentor; external mentor has no relevant expertise, potential conflict of interest (external party vs university or student), external party has no affinity with IDE or isn't aware of the difference between an internship and a graduation project.

Title

- ✓ **Clearly and briefly communicates the goal and context of the project** (mind: changes are possible till submitting the final report)
- ✗ Avoid **abbreviations**, long subtitle, **Caps For All Words In The Title**, non-descriptive but fancy/catchy phrases.

Introduction

- ✓ **Short** (max 400 words). It should just allow understanding the project context, its stakeholders, the current situation and the reasons for starting the project now.
- ✗ Extended list of references (a few main ones should do).

Problem definition

- ✓ Clearly state the main **conflicting requirements** or the **knowledge gap** that set the design challenge (i.e. cheap and light), be specific!
- ✗ Problem **not scoped down** (too open assignment), not doable within 100 working days (too wide assignment). Repetition of what's in the introduction, formulate potential solution.

Assignment

- ✓ **Imperative** ("Design/generate/create a that will ..."). From the assignment it should be crystal clear that there's the need for an **IDE student** to solve this specific problem. **Design challenge, methods, research questions and intended outcomes** should **fit** with the content/final attainment levels of the **MSc program**.
- ✗ No room for academic freedom (the assignment is basically a chore), repetition of what's in the problem definition or introduction.

Planning

- ✓ Aim at **finishing the project within 100 net working days**. Parttime graduation is ok, also allow for holidays. Planning should be visualized clearly. **Mid-term and green-light meetings indicated** (or even better; already scheduled).
- ✗ Kick-off scheduled while the project is already well on its way. Working weeks scheduled **before** the start of the project.