

TECHNICAL REPORT WRITING FOR ENGINEERS

CREATING GRAPHS – THE KEY POINTS

Make sure that...

- there isn't a title on the graph itself, but in the caption
- the graph has a figure number that is referred to from the text
- axes are scaled appropriately to not misrepresent the data or leave too much whitespace on the graph
- numbers used on the axes have a minimum number of significant figures and no trailing zeros
- axes have title and, if appropriate, units that are consistent with those used in the text
- gridlines are only used if appropriate and if they are not, tick marks appear on the axes
- that discrete data is represented with points and continuous data is represented with lines
- if a trendline is used, it is clear that it is a trendline (not original data) and include the equation and variance
- multiple series on the same graph can clearly be differentiated with a suitable key
- the choice of lines style (thickness, colour dashed) and point style (colour, shape, size) allow readers to clearly tell the difference between series.

For example

