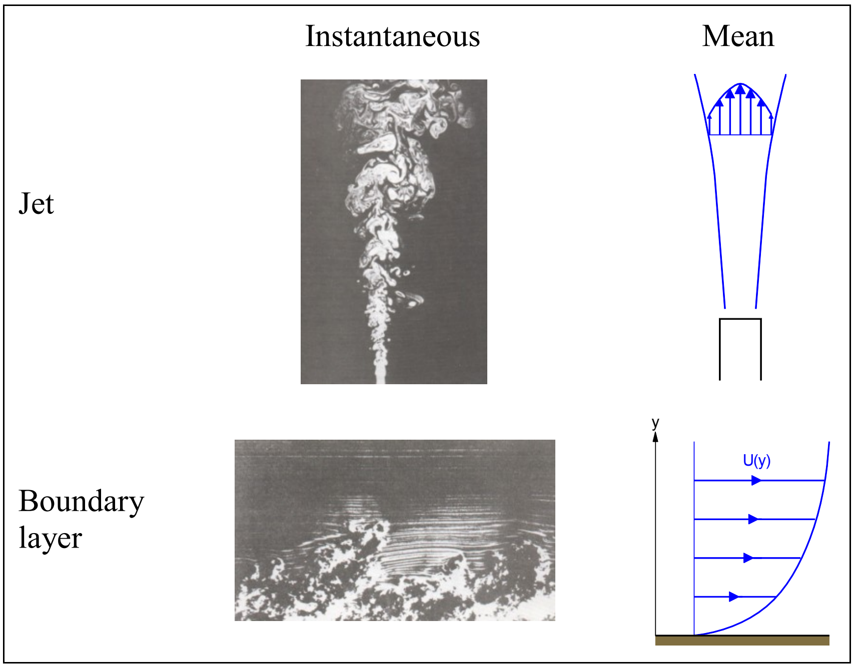
7. TURBULENCE SPRING 2019

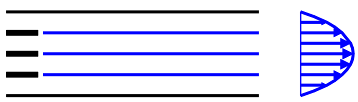
7.1 What is Turbulence?

- A "random", 3-d, time-dependent eddying motion with many scales, superposed on an often drastically simpler *mean* flow.
- A solution of the Navier-Stokes equations.
- The natural state at high Reynolds numbers.
- An efficient transporter and mixer ... of momentum, energy, constituents.
- A major source of energy loss.
- A significant influence on drag and boundary-layer separation.
- "The last great unsolved problem of classical physics"; (variously attributed to Sommerfeld, Einstein and Feynman).

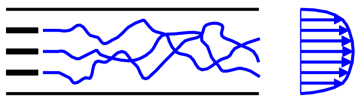


7.2 Momentum Transfer in Laminar and Turbulent Flow

In laminar flow, adjacent layers of fluid slide past each other without mixing. Transfer of momentum occurs between layers moving at different speeds because of viscous stresses.



In turbulent flow adjacent layers continually intermingle. A net transfer of momentum occurs because of the mixing of fluid elements from layers with different mean velocity. This mixing is a far more effective means of transferring momentum than viscous stresses. Consequently, the mean-velocity profile tends to be more uniform in turbulent flow.



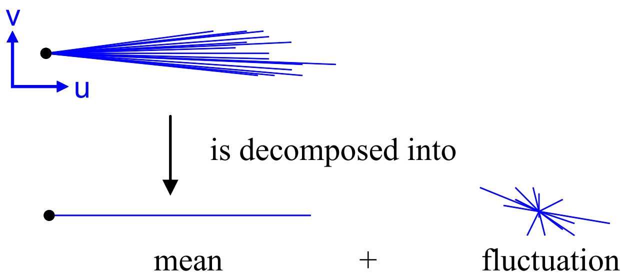
Which regime the flow adopts depends on the *Reynolds number*

$$\mathrm{Re} \equiv \frac{\rho U L}{\mu} \quad = \frac{UL}{\nu}$$

with “low” Reynolds numbers favouring laminar flow, “high” Reynolds numbers turbulent. What constitutes “low” or “high” depends on (a) the geometry of the flow; (b) what scales have been chosen for U and L. There is *not* a single dividing value.

7.3 Turbulence Notation

The instantaneous value of any flow variable can be decomposed into *mean* + *fluctuation*.



Mean and fluctuating parts are denoted by either:

- an overbar and prime: $u = \bar{u} + u'$
- upper case and lower case: $U + u$

The first is useful in deriving theoretical results, but cumbersome in general use. The notation being used should be obvious from the context. By definition, the average fluctuation is zero:

$$\overline{u'} = 0$$

In experimental work and in steady flow the “mean” is usually a time mean, whilst in theoretical work it is the probabilistic (or “ensemble”) mean. The process of taking the mean of a fluctuating quantity or product of fluctuating quantities is called *Reynolds averaging*.

The normal rules for averages of products apply:

$$\overline{u^2} = \bar{u}^2 + \overline{u'^2} \qquad (\textit{variance}) \qquad (1)$$

$$\overline{uv} = \bar{u}\,\bar{v} + \overline{u'v'} \qquad (\textit{covariance}) \qquad (2)$$

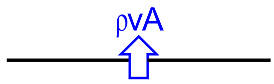
Thus, in turbulent flow the “mean of a product” is not equal to the “product of the means” but includes an (often very substantial) contribution from the net effect of turbulent fluctuations.

7.4 Effect of Turbulence on the Mean Flow

Engineers are usually only interested in the mean flow. However, turbulence must still be considered because although the averages of individual fluctuations (e.g. u' or v') are zero the average of a product ($u'v'$) is not and may lead to a significant net flux.

Consider mass and x-momentum fluxes in the y direction across surface area A. For simplicity, assume constant density.

7.4.1 Continuity



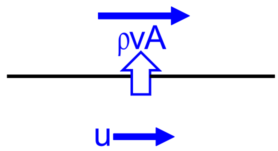
Mass flux: $\rho v A$

Average mass flux: $\rho \bar{v} A$

The only change is that the instantaneous velocity is replaced by the mean velocity.

The mean velocity satisfies the same continuity equation as the instantaneous velocity.

7.4.2 Momentum



x-momentum flux: $(\rho v A)u \quad = \rho(uv)A$

Average x-momentum flux: $\overline{(\rho v A)u} \quad = \rho(\bar{u}\,\bar{v} + \overline{u'v'})A$

The average momentum flux has the same form as the instantaneous momentum flux … except for additional fluxes $\rho\overline{u'v'}A$ due to the net effect of turbulent fluctuations. These additional terms arise from averaging a product of fluctuating quantities; i.e. they are a consequence of the fluid-flow equations being non-linear.

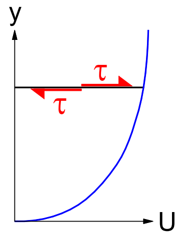
A net rate of transport of momentum $\rho\overline{u'v'}A$ from lower to upper side of an interface ...

- is equivalent to a net rate of transport of momentum $-\rho\overline{u'v'}A$ from upper to lower;
- has the same dynamic effect (rate of transfer of momentum) as a stress (force per unit area) of $-\rho\overline{u'v'}$.

This apparent stress is called a *Reynolds stress*.

Other Reynolds stresses ($-\rho\overline{u'u'}$, $-\rho\overline{v'v'}$, etc.) emerge when considering the average flux of the different momentum components in different directions.

The mean velocity satisfies the same momentum equation as the instantaneous velocity, except for additional apparent stresses: the Reynolds stresses $-\rho\overline{u'_i u'_j}$



Total stress really means the *net rate of transfer of momentum* (per unit area) and is given in simple shear flow by

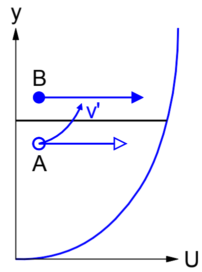
$$\tau = \underbrace{\mu\frac{\partial \bar{u}}{\partial y}}_{\substack{viscous\\ stress}} \quad \underbrace{-\rho\overline{u'v'}}_{\substack{turbulent\\ stress}} \qquad (3)$$

In fully-turbulent flow the turbulent contribution (Reynolds stress) is usually substantially larger than the viscous stress.

τ can be interpreted as either:
- the apparent force (per unit area) exerted by the upper fluid on the lower; or
- the rate of transport of momentum (per unit area) from upper fluid to lower.

The dynamic effect – a net transfer of momentum – is the same.

The nature of the turbulent stress can be illustrated by considering the fluctuations of fluid particles across some arbitrary surface.



- If particle A migrates upward ($v' > 0$) then it tends to retain its original momentum, which is now lower than its surrounds ($u' < 0$).
- If particle B migrates downward ($v' < 0$) it tends to retain its original momentum which is now higher than its surrounds ($u' > 0$).

In both cases, $-\rho\overline{u'v'}$ is positive and, on average, reduces momentum in the upper fluid and increases momentum in the lower fluid. On its own this would give rise to a net transfer of momentum from upper to lower fluid, equivalent to the effect of an additional mean stress.

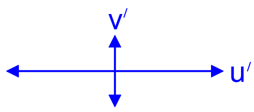
Velocity Fluctuations

Normal stresses: $\overline{u'^2}, \ \overline{v'^2}, \ \overline{w'^2}$

Shear stresses: $\overline{v'w'}, \ \overline{w'u'}, \ \overline{u'v'}$

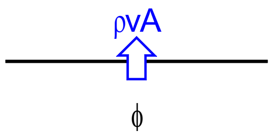
In careless, but widespread, use, both $-\rho\overline{u'v'}$ and $\overline{u'v'}$ are referred to as "stresses". The latter, with or without a minus sign, should really be called "kinematic turbulent stress".

Most turbulent flows are *anisotropic*; i.e. $\overline{u'^2}, \ \overline{v'^2}, \ \overline{w'^2}$ are different.



The level of turbulence may be quantified by either its absolute or relative size:
- *turbulent kinetic energy*: $k = \frac{1}{2}(\overline{u'^2} + \overline{v'^2} + \overline{w'^2})$ (4)
- *turbulence intensity*: $i = \dfrac{\textit{root-mean-square fluctuation}}{\textit{mean velocity}} = \dfrac{u'_{rms}}{U} = \dfrac{\sqrt{\frac{2}{3}k}}{U}$ (5)

7.4.3 General Scalar



In general, the advection of any scalar quantity ϕ gives rise to an additional scalar flux in the mean-flow equations; e.g.

$$\rho\overline{v\phi} = \rho\overline{v}\,\overline{\phi} \quad + \quad \underbrace{\rho\overline{v'\phi'}}_{additional\ flux} \tag{6}$$

Again, the extra term is the result of averaging a product of fluctuating quantities.

7.4.4 Turbulence Modelling

At high Reynolds numbers, turbulent fluctuations cause a much greater net momentum transfer than viscous forces throughout most of the flow. Thus, accurate modelling of the Reynolds stresses is vital.

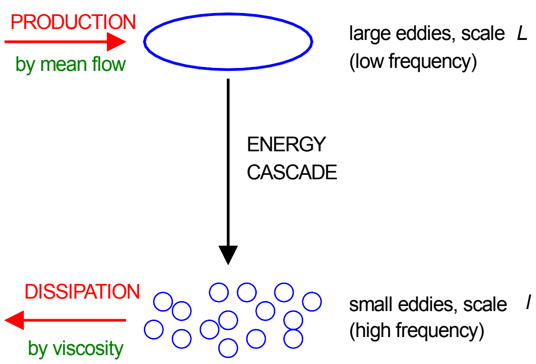
A *turbulence model* or *turbulence closure* is a means of approximating the Reynolds stresses (and other turbulent fluxes) in order to close the mean-flow equations. Section 8 will describe some of the commoner turbulence models used in engineering.

7.5 Turbulence Generation and Transport

7.5.1 Production and Dissipation

Turbulence is initially generated by instabilities in the flow caused by mean velocity gradients. These eddies in their turn breed new instabilities and hence smaller eddies. The process continues until the eddies become sufficiently small (so that fluctuating velocity gradients become sufficiently large) that viscous effects become significant and dissipate turbulence energy as heat.

This process – the continual creation of turbulence energy at large scales, transfer of energy to smaller and smaller eddies, and the ultimate dissipation of turbulence energy by viscosity – is called the *turbulent energy cascade*.



7.5.2 Turbulence Transport

It is common experience that turbulence can be transported with the flow. (Think of the turbulent wake behind a vehicle or downwind of a large building.) The following can be proved mathematically (see the appendix to Section 8 and the optional Section 10).

- Each Reynolds stress $\overline{u_i u_j}$ satisfies its own scalar-transport equation. These equations contain the usual time-dependence, advection and diffusion terms.

- The source term for an individual Reynolds stress $\overline{u_i u_j}$ has the form:

  production + *redistribution* − *dissipation*

  where:

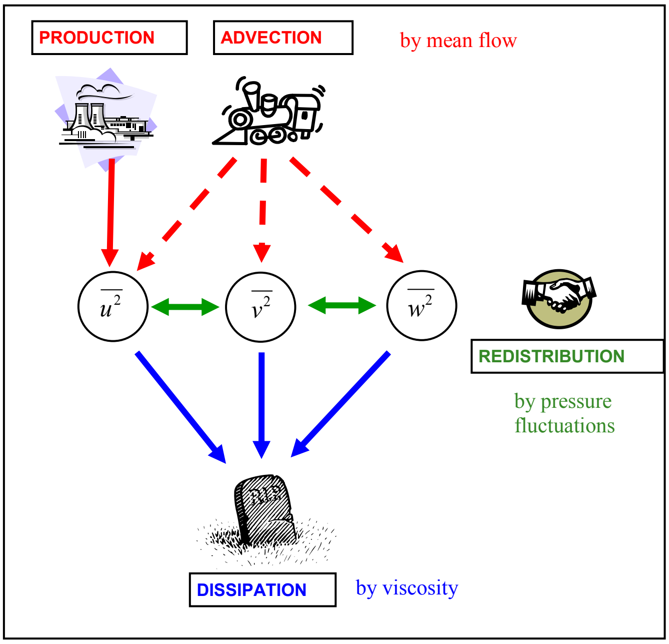
  production P_{ij} is determined by *mean velocity gradients*;
  redistribution Φ_{ij} transfers energy between stresses via *pressure fluctuations*;
  dissipation ε_{ij} involves *viscosity* acting on fluctuating velocity gradients.

  The k equation just contains production ($P^{(k)}$) and dissipation (ε) terms because it doesn't distinguish individual stresses.

- The production terms for different Reynolds stresses involve different mean velocity gradients; for example, it may be shown that the rates of production (per unit mass) of $\overline{u_1 u_1} \equiv \overline{u^2}$ and $\overline{u_1 u_2} \equiv \overline{uv}$ are, respectively,

$$\begin{aligned} P_{11} &= -2(\overline{uu}\frac{\partial U}{\partial x} + \overline{uv}\frac{\partial U}{\partial y} + \overline{uw}\frac{\partial U}{\partial z}) \\ P_{12} &= -(\overline{uu}\frac{\partial V}{\partial x} + \overline{uv}\frac{\partial V}{\partial y} + \overline{uw}\frac{\partial V}{\partial z}) - (\overline{vu}\frac{\partial U}{\partial x} + \overline{vv}\frac{\partial U}{\partial y} + \overline{vw}\frac{\partial U}{\partial z}) \end{aligned} \qquad (7)$$

  (*Exercise*: by "pattern-matching" write production terms for the other stresses).



- Turbulence is usually *anisotropic*; i.e. $\overline{u^2}$, $\overline{v^2}$, $\overline{w^2}$ are all different. This is because:
  (i) mean velocity gradients are greater in some directions than others;
  (ii) body forces (particularly buoyancy) only act in one direction;
  (iii) motions in certain directions are selectively damped (by boundaries).

- In practice, most turbulence models in regular use do not solve transport equations for all turbulent stresses, but only for the turbulent kinetic energy $k = \frac{1}{2}(\overline{u^2} + \overline{v^2} + \overline{w^2})$, relating the other stresses to this by an *eddy-viscosity* formula (see Section 8).

7.6 Simple Shear Flows

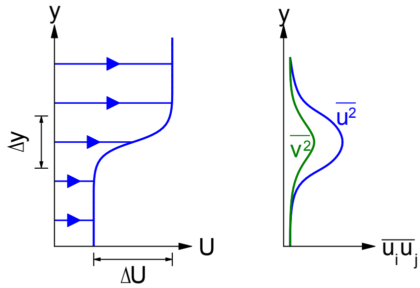
Flows for which there is only one non-zero mean velocity gradient, $\partial U/\partial y$, are called *simple shear flows*. Because they form a good approximation to many real flows, have been extensively researched in the laboratory, and are amenable to basic theory, they are an important starting point for many turbulence models.

For such a flow, the first of (7) and similar expressions show that $P_{11} > 0$ but that $P_{22} = P_{33} = 0$, and hence $\overline{u^2}$ tends to be the largest of the normal stresses. If there is a rigid boundary on $y = 0$ then it will selectively damp wall-normal fluctuations; hence $\overline{v^2}$ is the smallest of the normal stresses.

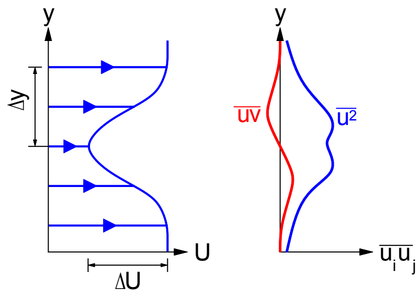
If there are density gradients (for example in atmospheric or oceanic flows, in fires, or near heated surfaces) then buoyancy forces will either damp (stable density gradient) or enhance (unstable density gradient) vertical fluctuations.

7.6.1 Free Flows

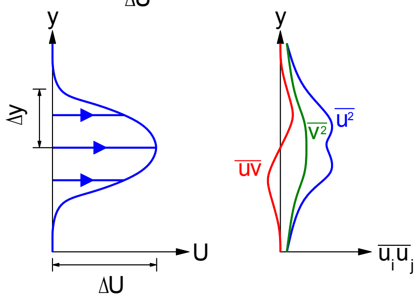
Mixing layer



Wake
(plane or axisymmetric)



Jet
(plane or axisymmetric)

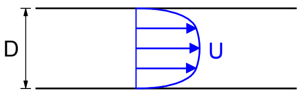


For these simple flows:

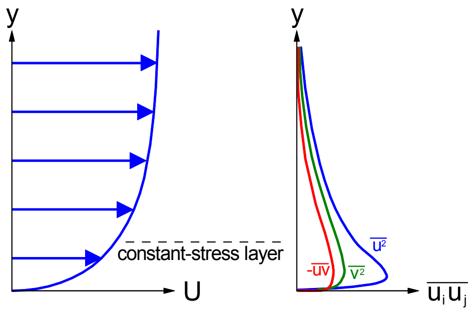
- maximum turbulence occurs where $|\partial U/\partial y|$ (hence turbulence production) is largest;
- $\overline{uv}$ has the opposite sign to $\partial U/\partial y$ and vanishes when this derivative vanishes;
- these turbulent flows are anisotropic: $\overline{u^2} > \overline{v^2}$.

7.6.2 Wall-Bounded Flows

Pipe or channel flow



Flat-plate boundary layer



<u>Wall Units</u>

Even if the overall Reynolds number $\mathrm{Re} = U_0L/\nu$ is large, and hence viscous transport much smaller than turbulent transport in the majority of the flow, there must ultimately be a thin layer very close to the wall where velocity fluctuations are damped and molecular viscosity is important.

An important parameter is the *wall shear stress* τ_w. Like any other stress this has dimensions of [density] × [velocity]^2 and hence it is possible to define an important velocity scale called the *friction velocity* u_τ (sometimes written u_*):

$$u_\tau = \sqrt{\tau_w/\rho} \qquad (8)$$

From u_τ and ν it is possible to form a viscous length scale ν/u_τ. Hence, we may define non-dimensional velocity and distance from the wall in *wall units*:

$$U^+ = \frac{U}{u_\tau} \qquad\qquad y^+ = \frac{yu_\tau}{\nu} \qquad (9)$$

y^+ is a measure of proximity to a boundary and how important molecular viscosity is compared with turbulent transport.

- When y^+ is small ($y^+ < 5$) viscous stresses dominate.
- When y^+ is large ($y^+ > 30$) turbulent stresses dominate.
- In between there is a *buffer layer*.

The total mean shear stress is made up of viscous and turbulent parts:

$$\tau = \underbrace{\mu\frac{\partial U}{\partial y}}_{viscous} \quad \underbrace{-\rho\overline{uv}}_{turbulent}$$

When there is no streamwise pressure gradient, τ is approximately constant over a significant depth and is equal to the wall stress τ_w.

Viscous Sublayer (typically, $y^+ < 5$)

Very close to a smooth wall, turbulence is damped by the presence of the boundary. In this region the shear stress is predominantly viscous. Assuming constant shear stress,

$$\tau_w = \mu \frac{\partial U}{\partial y}$$

$$\Rightarrow \qquad U = \frac{\tau_w y}{\mu} \tag{10}$$

i.e. the mean velocity profile in the viscous sublayer is linear.

Log-Law Region (typically, $y^+ > 30$)

At large Reynolds numbers, the turbulent part of the shear stress dominates throughout most of the boundary layer so that, on dimensional grounds, since u_τ and y are the only possible velocity and length scales,

$$\frac{\partial U}{\partial y} \propto \frac{u_\tau}{y}$$

or

$$\frac{\partial U}{\partial y} = \frac{u_\tau}{\kappa y}$$

where κ is a constant. Integrating, and putting part of the constant of integration inside the logarithm, gives either of the forms:

$$\frac{U}{u_\tau} = \frac{1}{\kappa}\ln\frac{u_\tau y}{\nu} + B \qquad \text{or} \qquad \frac{U}{u_\tau} = \frac{1}{\kappa}\ln\left(E\frac{u_\tau y}{\nu}\right) \tag{11}$$

κ (*von Kármán's constant*), *B* and *E* are universal constants with experimentally-determined values of about 0.41, 5.0 and 7.8 respectively.

Using the definition of wall units (equation (9)) these velocity profiles are often written in non-dimensional form:

Viscous sublayer: $\quad U^+ = y^+ \quad$ (12)

Log layer (smooth wall): $\quad U^+ = \frac{1}{\kappa}\ln y^+ + B, \quad$ or $\quad U^+ = \frac{1}{\kappa}\ln E y^+ \quad$ (13)

Experimental measurements indicate that in fully-developed flow the log law actually holds to a good approximation over a substantial proportion of the boundary layer. (This is where the logarithm originates in common friction-factor formulae such as the Colebrook-White formula for pipe flow). Consistency with the log law is probably the single most important consideration in the construction of turbulence models.

Note that for rough walls the logarithmic velocity profile is often written as

$$\frac{U}{u_\tau} = \frac{1}{\kappa}\ln\frac{y}{k_s} + B_k, \qquad \text{or} \qquad \frac{U}{u_\tau} = \frac{1}{\kappa}\ln\frac{z}{z_0}$$

(with the wall-normal distance written as z rather than y in the latter to reflect its common application in environmental flow. k_s is the Nikuradse roughness; z_0 is just called "the roughness length" and varies typically from about 0.1 m in rural settings to 1 m in cities.)

Summary

- Turbulence is a 3-d, time-dependent, eddying motion with many scales, causing continuous mixing.

- Any instantaneous flow variable may be decomposed as *mean* + *fluctuation*.

- The process of averaging turbulent variables or their products is called *Reynolds averaging* and leads to the *Reynolds-averaged Navier-Stokes* (RANS) equations.

- Turbulent fluctuations make a net contribution to the transport of momentum and other quantities. Turbulence enters the mean momentum equations via the *Reynolds stresses*; e.g.

  $$\tau_{turb} = -\rho\overline{u'v'}$$

- A means of specifying the Reynolds stresses (and hence solving the mean flow equations) is called a *turbulence model* or *turbulence closure*.

- Turbulence energy is *generated* at large scales by mean-velocity gradients (and, sometimes, body forces such as buoyancy). Turbulence is *dissipated* (as heat) at small scales by viscosity.

- Due to the directional nature of the generating process (mean shear and/or body forces) turbulence is initially *anisotropic*. Energy is subsequently *redistributed* amongst the different components by the action of pressure fluctuations.

- Turbulence modelling is guided by experimental and theoretical observations for simple free shear flows (mixing layer, jet, wake) and wall-bounded flows (pipe, flat plate).

- Theory and experiment suggest that throughout much of a turbulent boundary layer the shear stress is constant:

  $$\tau = \tau_w = \rho u_\tau^2$$

  and the velocity profile is logarithmic:

  $$\frac{\partial U}{\partial y} = \frac{u_\tau}{\kappa y}$$

Examples

Q1. Which is more viscous, air or water?

Air:	$\rho = 1.20$ kg m^{-3}	$\mu = 1.80\times10^{-5}$ kg m^{-1} s^{-1}
Water:	$\rho = 1000$ kg m^{-3}	$\mu = 1.00\times10^{-3}$ kg m^{-1} s^{-1}

Q2. The accepted critical Reynolds number in a round pipe (based on bulk velocity and diameter) is 2300. At what speed is this attained in a 5 cm diameter pipe for (a) air; (b) water?

Q3. Sketch the mean velocity profile in a pipe at Reynolds numbers of (a) 500; (b) 50 000. What is the shear stress along the pipe axis in either case?

Q4. Explain the process of flow separation. How does deliberately "tripping" a developing boundary layer help to prevent or delay separation on a convex curved surface?

Q5. The following couplets are measured values of (u,v) in an idealised 2-d turbulent flow. Calculate $\bar{u}$, $\bar{v}$, $\overline{u'^2}$, $\overline{v'^2}$, $\overline{u'v'}$ from this set of numbers.

(3.6,0.2)	(4.1,–0.4)	(5.2,–0.2)	(4.6,–0.4)	(3.4,0.0)
(3.8,–0.4)	(4.4,0.2)	(3.9,0.4)	(3.0,0.4)	(4.4,–0.3)
(4.0,–0.1)	(3.4,0.1)	(4.6,-0.2)	(3.6,0.4)	(4.0,0.3)

Q6. The rate of production (per unit mass of fluid) of $\overline{u^2}$ and $\overline{uv}$ are, respectively,

$$P_{11} = -2(\overline{uu}\frac{\partial U}{\partial x} + \overline{uv}\frac{\partial U}{\partial y} + \overline{uw}\frac{\partial U}{\partial z})$$

$$P_{12} = -(\overline{uu}\frac{\partial V}{\partial x} + \overline{uv}\frac{\partial V}{\partial y} + \overline{uw}\frac{\partial V}{\partial z}) - (\overline{vu}\frac{\partial U}{\partial x} + \overline{vv}\frac{\partial U}{\partial y} + \overline{vw}\frac{\partial U}{\partial z})$$

(a) By inspection, write down similar expressions for P_{22}, P_{33}, P_{23}, P_{31}, the rates of production of $\overline{v^2}$, $\overline{w^2}$, $\overline{vw}$ and $\overline{wu}$ respectively.

(b) Write down expressions for P_{11}, P_{22}, P_{33} and P_{12}, P_{23}, P_{31} in *simple shear flow* (where $\partial U/\partial y$ is the only non-zero mean velocity gradient). What does this indicate about the relative distribution of turbulence energy amongst the various Reynolds-stress components? Write down also an expression for $P^{(k)}$, the rate of production of turbulence kinetic energy, in this case.

(c) The different production terms can be summarised by a single compact formula

$$P_{ij} = -(\overline{u_i u_k}\frac{\partial U_j}{\partial x_k} + \overline{u_j u_k}\frac{\partial U_i}{\partial x_k})$$

using the *Einstein summation convention* – implied summation over a repeated index (in this case, k). See if you can relate this to the above expressions for the P_{ij}.