ACADEMIC WRITING

What is academic writing?

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- Has a distinct style, language and structure

Common types of academic writing for students

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1. Essay

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- Aim: To persuade the reader based on evidence, analysis and interpretation
- Often given as assignment at university level

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2. Lab report

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• Best way to know if your lab report is well written – should clearly show that you understand what you did

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3. Research proposal

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  - Why it is important to do this research

  - How the research will be done

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► Be aware of your limitations and the facilities/support offered by your university/lecturers before you plan your research

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▶ Both of these are evident when you describe "Why it is important to do this research"

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▶ Usually indicated when you describe "how you will do your research" and provide an estimated time frame

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SO, ALWAYS GIVE ENOUGH TIME TO PLAN AND WRITE YOUR RESEARCH PROPOSAL WELL!!!

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▶ Each university has its own guidelines on the layout (e.g., types and number of chapters, formatting, length of dissertation, etc.) – Make sure to check these before starting

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- Be honest regarding the limitations of your own work

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Be more precise/specific. E.g., "for the past 10 years"

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  - E.g., "As a teacher, you must treat your students fairly"

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  OR

  ○ Change the phrasing: E.g., "Teachers must treat their students fairly"

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- Use impersonal pronouns: E.g., "As a teacher, one must treat one's students fairly"

OR

- Change the phrasing: E.g., "Teachers must treat their students fairly"
- Note: Some academics may use the pronoun "we" in formal writing. While this is not technically incorrect, it is better to avoid using it

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○ E.g., "Charles Dickens is the greatest writer, and his influence is enormous"

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- Do not use flowery languages or make exaggerated claims
  - E.g., "Charles Dickens is the greatest writer, and his influence is enormous"
  - Use "Charles Dickens is one of the best-known writers, with a significant influence"

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  - Too many mistakes in academic writing convey a bad impression to the reader

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▶ Keep the content focused on the topic to avoid distracting the reader

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▶ Organise the content logically

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▶ Use a well-defined structure as recommended by your university guidelines (e.g., introduction, conclusion, chapters, headings and subheadings, etc.)

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These conventions should be consistent throughout the content

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o Avoid Wikipedia or other online sources which can be edited by anyone

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▶ Different citation styles can be used – check university guidelines for the recommended one and be consistent in the style used throughout the content

QUESTIONS