

Academic Writing

Academic writing is a particular style used in formal essays and other assessments for your course.  It requires **formal language**, a **logical structure** and should be supported by **evidence**.

1. **LANGUAGE**

Academic language is:

* **formal**
* **objective**
* **impersonal**

Try to Avoid:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
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| Being Too Conversational | Where possible you should try to avoid it sounding ***‘*chatty’** or **conversational**. You should also avoid colloquial or slang words or expressions and use more formal terms instead | The patient **got over** his illness | *T*he patient **recovered from** his illness  |
| Contractions | Write words out **in full** rather than use the shortened *version* | The research project **wonʼt** continue next year  | The research project **will** **not** continue next year |
| Acronyms and Initials | The **first** time an acronym or initials are used in an essay, it is acceptable to write the name in full with the acronym or initials in brackets after it. Every **subsequent** time it is used the acronym or initials can be used on their own |  |  |
| Informal Verbs | Try using more **formal verbs** when constructing your sentences | *When my degree is complete I will* ***get*** *a qualification* | *When my degree is complete I will* ***acquire*** *a qualification* |
| Personal Pronouns | Try to avoid using **I**, **you**, **he**, **she** or **they** | *I researched the topic extensively on the internet* | *The topic was researched extensively on the internet* |

1. **STRUCTURE**

Good academic writing is clearly structured. It must have a **beginning**, **middle** and an **end**.

In essays, reports and presentations, these parts are known as the:

* [**Introduction**](http://learn.solent.ac.uk/mod/book/view.php?id=116226&chapterid=15161)
* [**Main body**](http://learn.solent.ac.uk/mod/book/view.php?id=116226&chapterid=15162)
* [**Conclusion**](http://learn.solent.ac.uk/mod/book/view.php?id=116226&chapterid=15163)
1. **EVIDENCE**

Evidence are the facts, examples, or sources used to support a claim. For every claim you make in your writing, you will be required to **prove** your point. Your opinions and generalisations will need factual detail (evidence) to support them.

Those supporting details may come from a number of different types of sources, for example **books**, **academic journal articles** or **websites**.

Evidence can be separated into two categories:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Description** | **Examples** |
| **Primary Sources** | First-hand experiences, accounts, observations, reports, or narratives | Diaries, letters, contemporary newspapers, eyewitness accounts of events, data collected from surveys, and lab results |
| **Secondary Sources** | Critiques written by academics and scholars. These sources are considered secondary because they examine primary sources to present an argument or support a point of view | Academic journal articles, websites, textbooks, newspapers etc |

**General Rules for Using Evidence**

* Make sure your evidence is **appropriate** to the paper you are writing
* Make sure the evidence does, in fact, **support your argument** or your **claims**
* Tell your reader **why** this evidence supports your argument/claims
* Make sure you have an appropriate **amount** of evidence
* Make sure to appropriately **cite** your evidence