



Academic writing

Academic writing uses more formal language than we use in normal conversation.

If you look at an academic journal, like 'Psychology Review' or the 'Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods' (available online at www.ejbrm.com/main.html), you'll see that it tends to be written in a detailed, precise and objective style. Balanced and unemotional, it often includes an analytical evaluation of evidence.

Academic writing tends to be more structured than other forms of writing. It is usually written in the past tense and in an impersonal style. For example:

- I could have made it better if ... (informal)
- The project would have been improved by ... (academic)
- Historians will ring round their friends ... (informal)
- Historians often use personal contacts ... (academic)

Here are some tips for academic writing:

- Write in full sentences and paragraphs
- Use formal English – avoid slang
- Be precise – avoid waffle
- Be balanced – use facts and reasons
- Aim for clarity
- Learn the specialist terms for your topic
- See how other people do it in your subject area

People can find it difficult to link smoothly from one idea to another when they write. Here are some examples of linking words and phrases you could use to help your writing flow.

To add more information: along with, also, as well as, equally, further, in addition, together with
To sequence your argument: firstly, secondly, before, initially, prior to, subsequently, lastly, finally
To show similarities: again, comparatively, in the same way, similarly
To show a difference: alternatively, as opposed to, but, conversely, however, on the contrary
To emphasise a point: again, as highlighted by, as shown, clearly, for this reason, specifically
To show a result: as a result, for this reason, it can be seen that, this suggests that
To conclude or summarise: accordingly, as a result, consequently, finally, to sum up, in conclusion