



Workbook

Writing for Academic Purposes



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Instructions

1. This workbook provides you with lots of knowledge covering the unit you are studying. To help you to understand this knowledge, be active in your learning. You can do this in many ways:
 - Read the information, then re-read and use a highlighter to pick out key points
 - Complete all the highly recommended activities; these will help you to develop your understanding as well as summarise information
 - Complete the glossary of key terms at the back of the workbook either as you go along or at the end as a revision task
 - If possible, supplement your knowledge by using a textbook or some of the Useful References at the end of the workbook
 - Try to complete all or some of the think deeper activities. These are extra activities to expand your knowledge and develop your interests. You will need to have a separate notebook or use an electronic file to record your notes and thoughts
2. Some areas of knowledge are difficult to grasp; you might get disheartened, but don't! Just ask for help. Talk to other students or your assessor/tutor; they are there to help you.
3. Web links and other resources featured in this workbook are suggestions only to support the delivery of this qualification and should be implemented at the centre's discretion. The hyperlinks provided were live at the time this workbook was last reviewed. Please kindly notify Ascentis if you find a link that is no longer active.
Please note: Ascentis is not responsible for the content of third-party websites and, whilst we check external links regularly, the owners of these sites may remove or amend these documents or web pages at any time.

Key



Activity

These activities are highly recommended. There is space in the workbook for you to record your answers.



Think deeper

These activities will expand your learning. They are optional, and it is suggested that you record your answers in a separate notebook or electronic file.



1. Use a range of skills and materials to plan a task/assignment

Assessment Criteria

1.1 Interpret the meaning and implications of the specific question.

1.2 Identify appropriate terms and concepts relevant to an understanding of the specific question.

In this section you will gain a better understanding of academic writing. The ability to communicate ideas to an audience is an important skill in any sphere and is no less important in academic writing. There are specific conventions and rules that guide the process of academic writing, but the ultimate goal is always to logically and clearly explain ideas and answer questions.

a) Interpreting the meaning

It is important to be aware of different types of questions. There are two types of questions, known as closed questions and open questions.

Closed questions are usually answered with a simple 'yes' or 'no', for example: Are you feeling alright today? Was the bus late? Did you go on holiday?

Open questions usually start with a question word and require more description and/or analysis. Open questions start with How, Who, Why, What, or Where.

Your assignment or examination question will be an open question. This is to give you the opportunity to explain, analyse and answer the question in some detail. To be successful, you will need to interpret the meaning of the question.

To answer an assignment or examination question effectively you will need to analyse the meaning of the question and be able to identify the different parts of the question that all need consideration in your answer. Here, we will help you to decide what you must put into a piece of academic writing to adequately answer a specific question. The best way to explain this is with an example.



Question: 'Describe the possible implications a diagnosis of hypertension would have on a patient attending their GP's surgery.'

Ask yourself:

1. What instructions have I been given?
2. What am I being asked to do in the question?
3. What judgements am I being asked to make?

Here is the question again with the important points highlighted:

'**Describe** the possible **implications a diagnosis of hypertension** would have on a **patient** attending their GP's surgery.'

1. What instructions have I been given?

Describe – here the question wants you to identify the possibilities.

2. What am I being asked to do in the question?

Hypertension – you are being asked to consider hypertension.

You are also given information here about the situation the patient finds themselves in. This information is given to them in their GP surgery. They may not have had any idea that they had high blood pressure.

3. What judgements am I being asked to make?

Possible implications – here you are asked to think carefully about what this diagnosis may mean for the patient: is it going to be a positive or negative experience? Will it have any implications for the patient?

As you can see from this brief example, there is a lot of information that can be gleaned from the question. If you focus on hypertension and go into great detail about what it is and how it is caused, you would miss the major point or meaning of the question, which is about the implications this diagnosis might have on the patient's life.

Taking time to read the question carefully and really understand what you are being asked is vital.



Activity

Use the three questions above to interpret the meaning of the question below. Use the table to record your answers.

Describe, using examples, what is meant by the term 'social media'. Examine the impact of social media on the lives of young people.

1. What instructions have I been given?
2. What am I being asked to do in the question?
3. What judgements am I being asked to make?



b) Identifying key concepts

When you are presented with a question to answer, it is vital that you are able to pick out the important elements of the question and then form a structured response to that question.

There are many clues that can be taken from the wording of the question that will allow you to better understand exactly what is expected to be covered in your answer. Questions will contain a command word. Command words tell you how you need to answer a question or assignment, for example: describe, suggest, explain, analyse.

Examples:

1. Explain the difference between prokaryotic and eukaryotic cells.

Here you are asked not only to identify the differences between prokaryotic and eukaryotic cells in biology, but you are also asked to give reasons as to why they are different.

2. Describe the difference between prokaryotic and eukaryotic cells.

Here you would answer giving the key characteristics of the different cells but there would be no expectation of a set of reasons for those differences to be included in the answer.

3. Analyse the above graph/set of data/photograph and explain why you think this phenomenon has happened.

Here the question is slightly different; it is asking you to look at the piece of evidence that has been presented to you and draw out what that evidence shows. For example, you could be presented with a weather chart, a graph showing the different make-up of populations in two different towns or two different cells as in the first example. The question is asking you to analyse the evidence presented to you and, in essence, to say what you see and make an argument as to why that is happening.

Questions may include some additional wording that you must 'pick up' on in your answer.

Explain the difference between prokaryotic and eukaryotic cells. **Please include examples** to support your answer.

This statement means that you must include evidence in your answer, for example to back up and support your description of these two types of cell.

Using examples in the context of academic writing allows the writer to:

- Show that they have read around the subject
- Show that they are able to make connections between the theory of the subject they have been asked to write about and the application of that theory in the real world



As you can see from the description of the type of questions you might be asked, it is essential that you read the question and look at the command words carefully. Only then can you start to plan a response to the question.

The table below provides a list of common command words and their meaning.

Command word	Meaning
Analyse	Identify the main characteristics, explain how they relate together
Assess	Present different viewpoints and develop an informed judgement
Compare and contrast	Similarities and differences
Critically examine	Investigate closely and include strengths and limitations
Define	Provide a clear, precise meaning
Describe	Provide the main characteristics/features with accuracy
Discuss	Present an in-depth account including different viewpoints
Evaluate	Make a judgement based on evidence; include strengths and limitations



Activity

For each of the three topics below, write two questions using the command words above. For example: Topic – social media; Question 1. Define the term 'social media' and give three examples; Question 2. Assess the impact of social media on society.

Topic: Climate Change

1.

2.

Topic: The Slave Trade

1.

2.

Topic: Sport and Exercise

1.

2.



Think deeper

Use the internet if you want more practice. There are some online activities and a quiz on the following website: [The Open University – Understanding the Question](#)



Activity – Scenario

You are a teacher marking a set of answers produced by students. Read the questions and answers below. Decide whether or not each student has answered the question. Make notes underneath each answer. Write down whether the student has answered the question or not, and why you have come to that decision. Give praise where it is due and constructive criticism on what they could do to improve their responses.

Student: Suki

Question: What is meant by the term 'art movement'? Define the term 'cubism' used to describe an art movement.

Answer: There are many different art movements. Each art movement begins on a small scale but gradually builds up a group of followers who all produce work of a similar style. Often paintings can be seen to represent different art movements. Some art movements include impressionism in France or pop art, especially popular in America in the 1960s.

Comment:

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Student: Syed

Question: Identify and explain three reasons why the UK left the European Union.

Answer: The UK joined the European Union in 1973. There were a number of reasons why the UK joined. This includes the importance of economic trading, the likelihood of reducing war in Europe and ease of travel and working abroad.

Comment:

Student: Bembe

Question: Evaluate the use of the experimental method in Psychology.

Answer: The experimental method is frequently used in Psychology. It has the advantage of being repeatable, especially a laboratory experiment which can be replicated by other researchers. A further strength of the experimental method is that the researcher can control the variables being examined. This means a cause and effect or hypothesis can be researched. However, it is necessary to be aware of the limitations of the experimental method. For example, sometimes, experiments taking place in a laboratory setting are artificial and people may not behave in the same way in society. Furthermore, there is a disadvantage in that the experimenter(s) may unintentionally exert bias on the situation being researched.

Comment:



Summary

In this section we have covered different types of questions and how to interpret their meaning. We have also considered the importance of command words as they instruct the writer on the approach to take when answering a question.



2. Drafting an answer

Assessment Criteria

- 1.1** Devise a detailed plan for a written response to the specific question.
- 1.2** Use the plan to write a coherent and logical response to the specific question.
- 1.3** Present the response in an appropriate format.

In this section you will be introduced to some useful techniques and tips that will help you to plan and write answers to assignments and tasks.

a) Starting the writing process

When you have been given a question to answer, often the most difficult task is working out how to get started. However, this is precisely the time at which you are best placed to create a plan for your answer.

We have already gone over how to interpret the instructions for answering a question and the meaning of a question; we now need to turn that into a plan.

During the planning stage you need to keep a number of key concepts in mind. These are:

i) The conventions of academic writing (the five Cs)

Cohesion – your answer should easily move from one paragraph or concept to the next

Clarity – the answer should be written in clear language

Consistency – the answer should be written in the same style throughout, e.g. in note form or in prose form but not both

Conciseness – the language used should convey the meaning in as few well-used words as possible

Completeness – include all relevant information in your answer

The answer should follow **a logical pattern** and provide **a logical argument**.

Academic writing is written in a formal manner using the third person. We will look at this in Section 3.



Think deeper

If you want to improve your academic writing or would just like more confidence and practice, try the BBC websites listed below. There are lots of interactive resources and ideas to help you.

www.bbc.co.uk/teach/skillswise/planning-your-writing/z46nqp3

www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/gothedistance/academicwriting

ii) Planning

Most academic answers will require the following components: an introduction, the main body and a conclusion. Subjects differ in the way in which essays are developed and arguments constructed. However, the information below is likely to be useful to everyone.

- **Introduction** – here you will specifically address the question, explain the argument you are presenting or how you have interpreted the question.
- **Main body** – here you will describe, define and develop your argument or set of ideas. This section will be made up of several paragraphs and you will need to plan the theme of each paragraph carefully and make sure you present your answer in a logical order.
- **Conclusion** – here you will summarise the main points and explain how the arguments and evidence answer the question.



Activity

Introductions and conclusions are not simply used in essays and reports; they can be applied to presentations, too. Conduct research, using books and/or the internet and the Useful references section, to find out what makes a) a good introduction, b) a well organised main body and c) a strong conclusion. Summarise your findings in the 'Top Tips' boxes below.

Top Tips for Writing Introductions	Top Tips for Writing the Main Body
Top Tips for Writing the Conclusions	



Bearing these conventions in mind, we can now create a plan for our work. We will use the example question from Section 1: 'Describe the possible implications a diagnosis of hypertension would have on a patient attending their GP's surgery.'

In this workbook you will see two examples of different ways to plan an answer to this question.

Example 1 is illustrated below.

Introduction

Here we set the scene:

- Explain the term 'hypertension'
- Explain the incidence of hypertension in the UK
- Explain how many people are treated for hypertension in the UK by their GPs
- Explain what the treatment for hypertension can entail
- Explain what the long-term implications of non-treatment are

Main body

Here we will go over the possible impact this diagnosis could have on the patient, positive versus negative:

- **Positive** – allows the patient to have a diagnosis and have the reassurance of being treated
- **Positive** – allows the GP to explain the implications for the patient and allay any inaccurate assumptions
- **Negative** – depression at the diagnosis of a chronic disease
- Effects on the individual versus effect on the patient's wider family/social circle – impact on family life – changes in smoking/eating/drinking habits, worry for rest of family, need to take regular lifelong medications and start exercise programme with family

Conclusion

Here we summarise the preceding paragraphs and give our opinion about whether this would be a positive or negative experience, and even give suggestions about how the patient experience could be improved with examples.

Reference list

It is very important that the work of others is not directly copied and passed off as your own work. This is called plagiarism and is not acceptable.

We will cover referencing later on in this workbook.

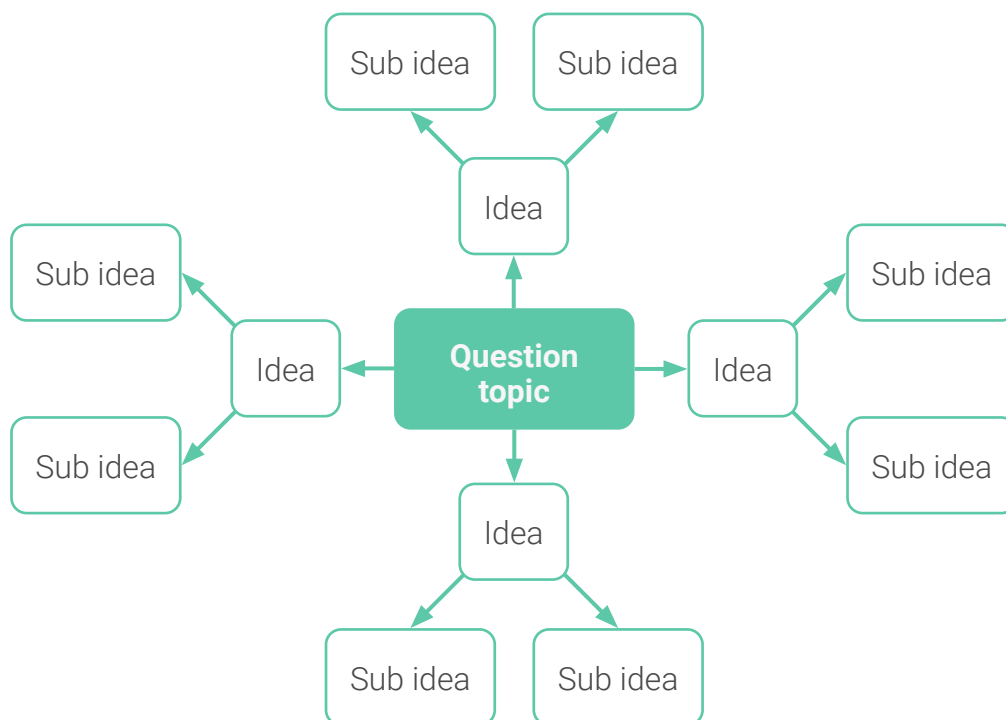


iii) Spidergrams

An alternative way of planning an answer is using a spidergram.

Spidergrams are a useful way of gathering together your ideas when answering a question.

A spidergram is a planning tool that helps you to group information and ideas so that you have a rough outline of how you want your answer to look, and what you want it to contain, before you start writing in earnest. An example spidergram is shown below.

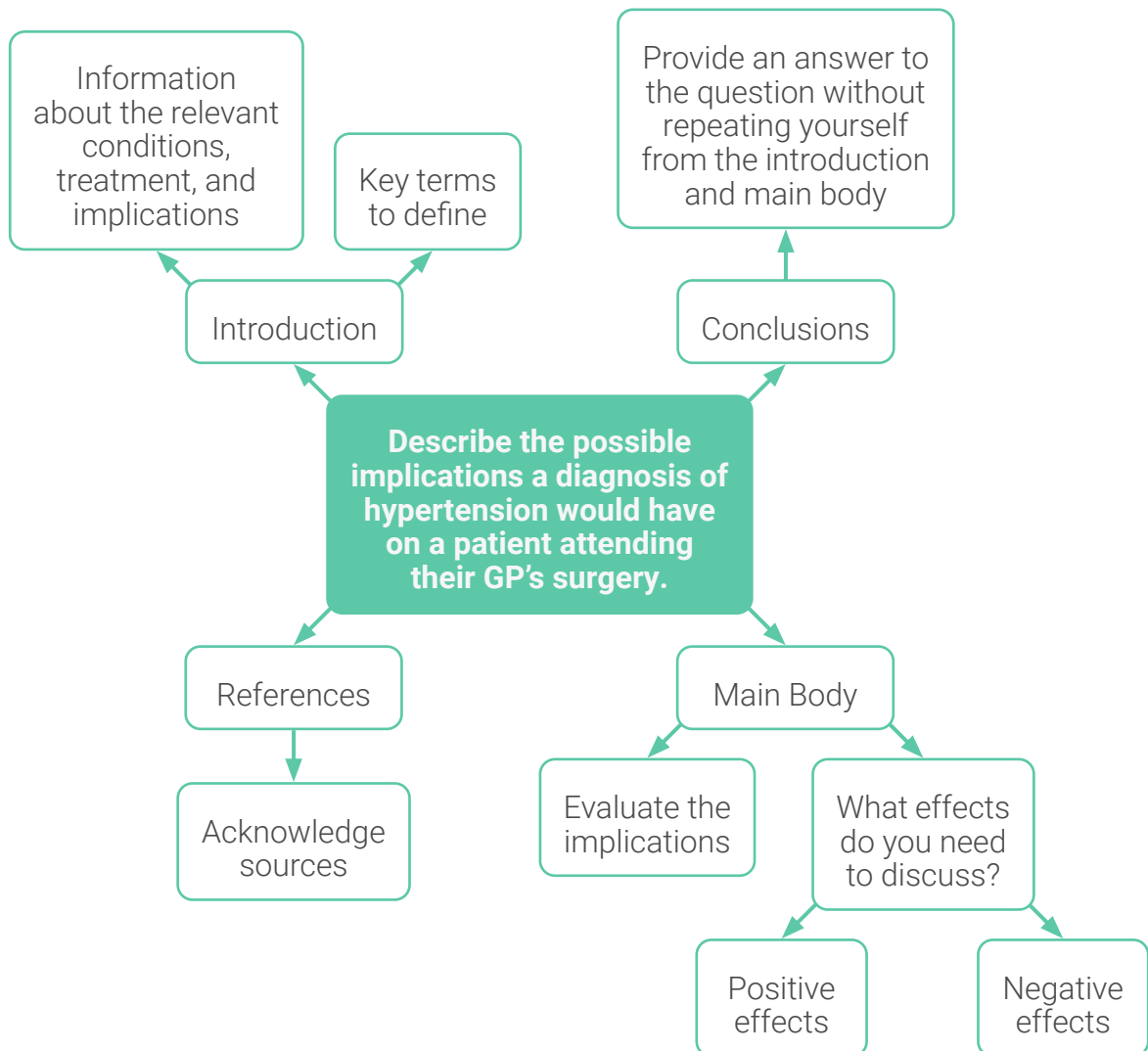


We will now use the spidergram to plan an answer to the example question from Section 1.



Example 2:

'Describe the possible implications a diagnosis of hypertension would have on a patient attending their GP's surgery.'





Activity

Practise the skill of planning an answer to an assignment question using one of the formats you have seen in this workbook. Use one of the questions below or a specific question from one of your tutors.

Questions to choose from:

1. Assess the arguments for gun ownership in America.
2. Describe the key characteristics of British farming and evaluate how sustainable it is.
3. Online shopping means 'death to the high street'. Examine this statement in light of two major retailers in the UK.

Plan

Top Tips

To draft an answer, remember a clear introduction, logical main body and strong conclusion. When you draft an answer (e.g. by using a spidergram), remember that at each step it is useful to go back to your question and ensure you are answering what has been asked of you. The most common mistake in academic writing is the point or essence of the question being missed. It is easy to veer off on an interesting tangent when you are researching a particular subject, but by going back to the question regularly, this can be avoided.



b) Using source materials and referencing

An important element of any piece of academic writing is demonstrating how well the author has researched their subject. For example, in answering the question regarding hypertension, the author will have had to read a number of different resource materials. For example:

- Published works
- Reference books
- Journal articles
- Newspaper articles

Internet resources:

- Journal databases, e.g. PubMed or EMBASE



Activity

The table below identifies a range of sources that could be used in an academic assignment.

4. Think about the subjects you are studying and identify an example for each source.
5. Complete the table by considering the advantages and disadvantages of each source.

Source	Example	Advantages	Disadvantages
Books			
Journals			

...continued



....continued

Source	Example	Advantages	Disadvantages
Newspapers			
Websites			
Databases			
Television programmes			

i) Plagiarism and referencing

Plagiarism: When source material has been read thoroughly, and the useful parts of that material are used in a task or assignment, it is very important that the work of others is not directly copied and passed off as your own work. This is called plagiarism and is not acceptable. Plagiarism is an extremely serious act of academic dishonesty.

Plagiarism can be easily avoided by adequately referencing any source material that you use.



Think deeper

If you want to find out more about plagiarism, test your knowledge and think about different scenarios, try this online quiz: <https://www.turnitin.com/static/plagiarism-quiz/>. If possible, compare your answers with your peers on the course.

Referencing: It is acceptable, however, to critically appraise someone else's work or to incorporate the work of others and use it to support your own argument. To do this, the source material must be clearly identified in your work and described in your reference list.

Depending on who you are writing the piece of work for, they will have rules on which type of referencing method they want you to use. One well-known example of a referencing style is Harvard Referencing. Harvard Referencing is frequently used in Higher Education and is, therefore, a useful skill to develop.

The Harvard system involves two parts: firstly, what is known as a citation in the text; secondly, a reference list. We will now look at what each of these mean.

Citation in the text: this is a clear but brief identification of the source being referred to, which you include within the text of your work. In Harvard Referencing, you must cite the name of the author(s) or editor(s) and the year of publication every time you paraphrase or summarise a source.

The citation can be placed:

In the beginning: Newman (2008) introduces the idea ...

In the middle: ... central to a better life expectancy was an early diagnosis (Campbell, 2009), even though ...

At the end: ... was the best measure of performance (Kennerley and Neely, 2003).

After a direct quote, you must add a page number in the citation: '...' (Newman, 2008, p. 21).

Reference list: this is an accurate list of all the references you have cited. The references include the full details of each source. This enables a reader to follow up these references and consult the original texts.

In the Harvard system, a reference list is provided at the end of your work, and details are organised alphabetically by the surname of the author or editor. Usually, sources are divided up into texts such as books and journals and websites are listed separately.

A **reference list** includes all works that have been referred to in the assignment.



A **bibliography** includes all the materials you have researched in order to complete your assignment, but you may not have cited them all. Quite often a bibliography is not required; therefore, it is necessary to check with your tutor what is expected for your assignment.

To see how the Harvard system works, we will look at how to refer to books, journals and the internet.

There are many different rules to follow BUT there is a lot of help available, including:

- College and university library staff, who are experts
- Your teachers, who will guide you on the process you need to follow
- Online reference guides, together with many examples; there are a few listed in the Useful references section at the end of this workbook.

The rules change slightly if you are referencing a book, journal or internet resource.

The following are examples of references using the Harvard system:

Book chapter

Surname of chapter author, Initial. (Year of publication) Title of chapter or section, in Title of book. Place of publication: publisher, page range.

Townsend, R. (2008) Part 1: The Basics, in 100 Questions and Answers about High Blood Pressure (Hypertension). Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett Publishers, pp. 1-36.

Web reference

Organisation. (Year that the page was last updated) Title of article or section [Online]. Title of the web page. Available at: URL [Accessed date].

Public Health England. (2017) Health matters: combating high blood pressure [Online]. GOV.UK. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-matters-combating-high-blood-pressure/health-matters-combating-high-blood-pressure> [Accessed 1 March 2021].

Journal Article

Surname, Initial. (Year of publication) Title of article [Online], Title of Journal, volume number (issue number), page range. Doi: doi number if available OR Available at: URL [Accessed date].

Ho, T.M., Estrada, D., Agudo, J., Arias, P., Capillas, R., Gibert, E., Isnard M.M., Solé M.J., and Salvadó, A. (2016) Assessing the impact of educational intervention in patients with hypertension, Journal of Renal Care, 42(4), pp. 205-211. Doi: 10.1111/jorc.12165.



Activity – Scenario

Read each scenario and answer the questions that follow.

Scenario 1

Growth of globalisation

The British sociologist Anthony Giddens (born 1938) has written extensively on the growth of globalisation and new media. **Giddens defines** globalisation as the notion that people are increasingly living in one world, meaning individuals and societies are increasingly connected and interdependent. Globalisation has been occurring over many years; it could be argued to have always been a part of our world as human beings searched to discover new parts of the world due to improved transport, e.g. ships. But sociologists such as Giddens draw attention to the ways in which globalisation has grown quickly and in many ways in the last 30–40 years.

1. There is reference to **Giddens' definition** of globalisation, but it has not been accurately cited in the text. Write down the details you would need in an in-text citation.
2. Briefly describe what you would expect to see in a reference list if Giddens' work was found in a book.

...continued



Millie has completed a draft coursework assignment which she hands to her tutor for guidance. She has used her textbook to help her describe the work of a human resources department in an organisation. Millie has copied out sections of the textbook because it describes the key characteristics of the work of a human resources department. Millie's tutor returns the assignment saying she has plagiarised work. Millie explains to her tutor that she chose the book because it answered the question and explained everything very well. She did not realise this was the wrong thing to do.

1. Can you commit plagiarism by mistake? Explain your answer.
2. Do you think Millie has plagiarised work? Explain your answer.
3. What advice would you give Millie so that she cannot be accused of plagiarism in the completion of her final piece of work?

...continued



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Scenario 3

Noah has completed his assignment on advertising and hands it in without a reference list. Noah left his planning until the last minute and wrote the assignment using his lecture notes and a textbook. He did read a journal article and has used some of the ideas but he cannot find the reference. The assignment marking scheme includes marks for referencing.

1. Identify the mistakes Noah has made.
2. If Noah were given 24 hours to put right his mistakes, what advice would you give him?

ii) Summarising, paraphrasing and quoting

When you are writing, you will refer to other people's work and research. To do this, you will sometimes need to summarise, paraphrase and use quotations.



Activity

Use books and the internet to research answers to the questions below.

Questions

1. Explain what is meant by the terms 'summarise' and 'paraphrase'. Include the reference(s) for the source(s) you used.

Summarise	Paraphrase
Explanation:	Explanation:
Reference:	Reference:

2. Give an example of a quotation that you could use in your academic writing and correctly reference the source.

Quotation:

Reference:



Activity

Read the excerpt, titled 'Watch your business language'. Then, **a)** paraphrase the meaning of 'business' and **b)** summarise why it is important to use correct terminology in business from the excerpt. Write your responses in the spaces that follow the excerpt.

Watch your business language

The word 'business' has a long history in English, descending from 'busyness' – a state of being busy. Rather than simply 'busy with anything', it has come to mean 'activity that is intended to result in a transaction with an outsider', hence a sale. A 'business' is therefore an entity that performs activities that contribute to a sale transaction.

Several other words are widely used to mean a business or 'business in general'. The word 'firm' is often used to describe a business of any kind. An 'enterprise' is similarly used to mean any sort of business or a firm, although it was originally reserved to refer to a newly formed or entrepreneurial business. The word 'company' is also often used to mean a business or firm. However, if you are involved in business, it is better to avoid using it in this way.

As with all bodies of knowledge, a lot of terms are used in business to express particular meanings. 'Company' is a good example of this. Whereas the majority of businesses are identifiable people who work in and manage a firm that they own, a company is something very different: a 'thing' that buys, sells, employs people and takes on debt in its own right. The company has a long history, being invented about five hundred years ago to make it easier for more than one person or family to invest in a business, thus enabling it to take on larger projects than would be possible with only one investor. There are over two million companies registered in the UK, of which almost all are 'limited companies', meaning that in bad times, an individual investor's loss is limited to the amount of their investment and no more.

A company is one of several legal forms of business, alongside sole traders, partnerships and others. It is therefore best not to use the word 'company' to mean a business in general, as there is a danger of confusing other people as well as yourself.

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1. Paraphrase: the meaning of 'business'.

2. Summarise: why it is important to use correct terminology in business.

iii) Structuring a logical response

The planning phase of a piece of academic writing is crucial for two reasons:

- Content planning
- Structure planning

When we talk about the structure of an answer, we refer back to the five Cs of successful academic writing in the previous section.



Think deeper

If you have forgotten the five Cs, look back at Section 2 and re-read the summary of the five Cs. Make yourself a five Cs postcard or take a photograph on your phone so that you can refer to these when you need to.

To best structure an answer, cohesion and logical order are extremely important. Within the logical order comes the concept of chronological order. This means that as you explain your answer, you make sure you have explained concepts as they would arise naturally. When the word 'logical' is used to describe an answer, it means that the answer is explained in an order that connects the main points and moves fluently between concepts and does not jump around.

For example, if you are answering a question about hypertension and you want to add some background, you will write about the history of hypertension first, followed by the diagnosis, then the treatment. Discussing treatment before you have explained what hypertension is would not be chronological or logical. Using the information you have gleaned from the question, the concepts you want to put across in your answer can then be structured into the answer.

For example:

'Hypertension is a complicated and often multifactorial illness and has wide-ranging impacts on those suffering from it. We are now going to explain in more detail the potential impacts a diagnosis of hypertension can have on an individual. We will begin by outlining the possible positive impacts.

It is often more difficult to describe the positive impacts of a chronic disease diagnosis; however, there are some benefits to a diagnosis.'

Top tip

When planning the content of paragraphs, always use the last sentence of the paragraph to introduce the content of the next paragraph.



Summary

In this section we have looked at how to draft answers in academic writing. We have covered the five Cs; writing an introduction, a main body and a conclusion; as well as using planning tools such as a spidergram. We have considered where to find material for assignments, how to reference and avoid plagiarism, and used paraphrasing and summarising to practise essential writing skills.



3. Language conventions

Assessment Criteria

- 3.1** Write accurately following accepted written language conventions.
- 3.2** Use appropriate style and register showing awareness of audience.
- 3.3** Use accurately a standard form of referencing reflecting a range of sources.

In this section you will learn more about academic writing, including using formal language and adjusting register to show your awareness of your audience. We have covered the importance of referencing sources of material in Section 2.

a) Writing accurately and using appropriate language

The ability to explain a concept or argument to an audience is a skill that can be learned. We have gone over the analysis of a question and the planning of an answer. We now need to take into account who we are addressing our answer to.

Your audience could be:

- The person who set the question
- A group of peers
- A group of strangers who have never heard of the concept you are trying to explain

Whoever the audience is, your writing must be tailored to enable your message to be understood. For example, if you were asked to provide your answer to the hypertension question to a group of doctors, you may go into more technical details than you would if you were trying to explain your answer to a group of people who had no medical training. You would also avoid the use of jargon; jargon is terminology used within a specific group to describe things which usually make no sense to those outside the group.

For example, if you said 'Hypertension can lead to congestive cardiac failure and myocardial infarction' to the doctors, that would be understood; however, the use of jargon makes it very difficult for anyone else to understand. To a lay audience, you would say: 'High blood pressure can stop the heart working properly and can lead to a heart attack'.

It is the simple changes that you can make to the wording of your answer that will not only make the work more understandable to everyone, but also demonstrate to those assessing the work that you have understood the audience you are presenting your work to and have demonstrated higher-level thinking in the process.



Activity

Academic writing includes writing in the third person. If you are not used to this, it can seem strange at first. Use the internet to help you complete the questions below. This will develop your knowledge and understanding of writing in the third person.

1. What is a pronoun?

2. Write a list of third person pronouns.

3. Change the following sentence starters from the first person to the third person:
 - a) Format: Report
I will be arguing that climate change is...

 - b) Format: Essay
As a nurse I need to be aware of equality and diversity when caring for patients ...

...continued



....continued

b) Format: Presentation

I am going to talk about my experiment on social conformity amongst adults...

We have seen that academic writing is about conveying a message to an audience just as much as any other form of communication. It is about following a set of conventions that allow for the standardisation of the work produced, which in turn allows the work to be assessed following a standardised set of criteria that can be applied to work written anywhere in the world.

This standardisation helps to set the 'tone' of the work you are writing. The tone is the manner or characteristics of the writing itself. The following elements help to create the tone of academic writing:

- Formal writing style
- Maintaining an impersonal or third-person tense, e.g. not using 'I'
- Use of sophisticated vocabulary relating to the question being asked, e.g. avoiding slang terms or abbreviations

It is important to be able to recognise different styles of writing as they are linked to different audiences. So far, we have considered academic writing, but in the activity that follows you will see the effect of adapting the style and register of language to suit different formats and audiences.



Activity

Read the statements below and change the language according to the audience.

1. Academic writing: *'Using an agreed set of climate measures we can state Spain has a precipitation of less than 30 mm in the driest month of the year.'*

How would you write this statement as a holiday advertisement for Spain?

2. Magazine book review: *'The Joy Luck Club by Amy Tan tells the stories of four Chinese-American mothers and daughters in San Francisco. The women are united by their family ties and the club they have formed to play mahjong. They call the club the Joy Luck Club. Tan writes with beauty and humour; she has first hand experience of what it means to be Chinese-American and she brings that cultural richness to her narratives.'*

How would you write this review in a text message to a friend

3. Newspaper headlines: *'Space Race: Experiments on Mars'*
'Obesity: Biggest Killer in Last 20 Years'

Select one of the headlines above and answer the relevant question below.

How would you write about the scientific work taking place on Mars in an academic piece of writing? Include at least three sentences, one in-text citation and one full reference.

...continued



....continued

How would you write about the increasing rate of obesity in an academic piece of writing? Include at least three sentences, one in-text citation and one full reference.



Key terms

Instruction

This is a list of useful terms for the unit Academic Writing Skills. Use this workbook, books or the internet to find helpful definitions. Write out the definitions as you go through the workbook or at the end as a useful summary and check on your knowledge and understanding.

Academic writing

Bibliography

Clarity

Closed question



Cohesion

Command words

Completeness

Conciseness

Consistency

Paraphrase



Plagiarism

Open question

Quotation

References

Sources

Spidergram



Summarise

Third person (pronoun



Useful references

Books

Day, T. (2015) *Success in academic writing*. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Hopkins, D. and Reid, T. (2018) *The academic skills handbook: your guide to success in writing, thinking and communicating at university*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Pears, R. and Shields, G.J. (2019) *Cite them right: the essential referencing guide*. London: Red Globe Press / Macmillan International Higher Education.

Websites

Analysing the question

help.open.ac.uk/understanding-the-question – Understanding the question

Planning your writing

www.bbc.co.uk/teach/skillswise/planning-your-writing/z46nqp3 – Ideas on planning your writing

Using source materials, referencing, and plagiarism

www.canterbury.ac.uk/students/docs/study-skills/resource-1-Harvard-Referencing-Guide.pdf – A quick guide to Harvard Referencing

www.librarydevelopment.group.shef.ac.uk/referencing/harvard.html – Comprehensive guide to Harvard Referencing

www.futurelearn.com/info/courses/prepare-to-study-uk/0/steps/48597 – Information on summarising, paraphrasing and using quotations

www.plagiarism.org/ – Useful website covering the topic of plagiarism

www.turnitin.com/static/plagiarism-quiz/ – Online plagiarism quiz

Language

www.thoughtco.com/third-person-pronouns-1692467 – Identifies third-person pronouns



Study and writing skills

www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/gothedistance/studyskills – A wide selection of study skills support material and tasks

www.futurelearn.com/courses/english-for-study-intermediate – A free online course to develop writing skills for university

Material for download

www.ucas.com/file/88681/download?token=gagXzQMZ – Useful study guide: answering the question

www.ucas.com/undergraduate/student-life/study-skills-guides – Useful study skills material on a range of topics

Disclaimer

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If you have any queries, feedback or need further information please contact:

Ascentis

Ascentis House
Lancaster Business Park
3 Mannin Way
Lancaster
LA13SW