



ACADEMIC WRITING

BA Advocacy/ BA Sociology

How to lay out assignments

- Font size: 12 point
- Font Style: Times New Roman
- Layout: Justified
- Line Spacing : 1.5 line spacing for assignments
2 (double) line spacing for dissertations

This means that your writing should look like this on your page. It is easier to pre – set these settings on your computer so that you do not forget to do this at the end. For help with this please see the IT service Desk. When you complete your writing, you should use this checklist to ‘format’ your work. Incorrect formatting will loose you marks!

Academic Writing

- Avoid abbreviations and contractions

dept.	they're
e.g.	weren't
i.e.	isn't

- Write in the third person

I/We/You - NO!

Research concluded that
Jones will argue

- Use formal language

His argument was a bit much
Jones disagrees with the assertion arguing that...

(Cottrell, 2003)



Academic Writing

Avoid using wide phrases such as:

Appears to....

Seems to...

Possibly...

Probably...

Apparently...

Be professional and not descriptive or make assumptions

The subject seemed nice

Jones made a flamboyant remark

This research was good

(Cottrell, 2003)

Academic Writing

Be objective

How could the Government get away with this - NO!

Avoid asking questions - even rhetorical ones

Unfortunately no-one wants your opinion, present the facts and back those up.

Be concise - do not use unnecessary words - the life story is not needed

Use continuous prose

- sentences should be written in full

- avoid bullet points in essays

- avoid isolated sentences - ensure the work flows

(Cottrell, 2003)

Academic Writing

Acronyms

Acronyms should be set out in full initially

NHS - National Health Service

SSWB(W)A - Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act

ACAS - Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service

Once you have initially set them out in your work you can then use the acronym.

Example: The National Health Service (NHS) confirm that obesity may be a cause of breathlessness.

The NHS state that a calorie-controlled diet can assist in combatting obesity.

(National Health Service, 2019)



Writing academically should be...

Logical - a sequence

Reasoned - backed up by arguments that can be referred to

Supported by evidence

With reference to a wide range of resources - library journals
books
websites

Check the reliability and bias of resources

Objective

(Cottrell, 2003)

Writing - Key Words

Describe

Discuss

Analyse

Compare

Contrast



Describe

‘give a detailed account of something in words’

Discuss

‘talk or write about a topic in detail’

Waite and Hawker, 2009

Analyse

‘examine something in detail to explain it or to find out its structure or composition’

Compare

‘point out the ways in which one person or thing is similar to another’

Contrast

‘compare two things to emphasize their difference’

Waite and Hawker, 2009

In academic writing you will be expected to:

Compare similarities and differences

Contrast opposing points

Evaluate the significance of the similarities and differences

Make a judgement, giving reasons

Show evidence used to arrive at the judgement

Get the balance right



PRACTICE

Describe

‘give a detailed account of something in words’



PRACTICE

Discuss

‘talk or write about a topic
in detail’



PRACTICE

Analyze

‘examine something in detail to explain it or to find out its structure or composition’



PRACTICE

Compare

‘point out the ways in which one person or thing is similar to another’

Contrast

‘compare two things to emphasize their difference’

References

Cottrell, S. (2003). *The Study Skills Handbook*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

National Health Service (2019) *Overview Obesity*. Available at: [Obesity - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk) (Accessed: 21 March 2021).

Waite, M. and Hawker, S. (2009) *Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.