

Academic Assessments



Styling: Subjective Vrs Objective Writing ?!

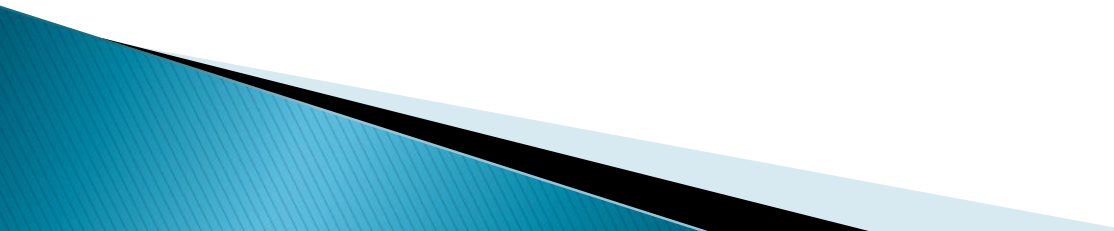
What is the difference?



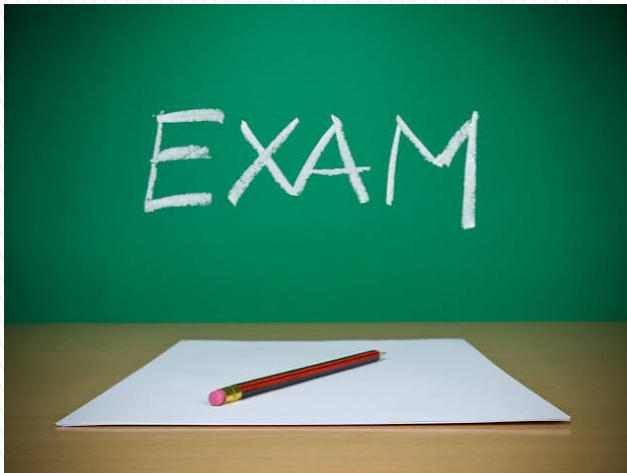
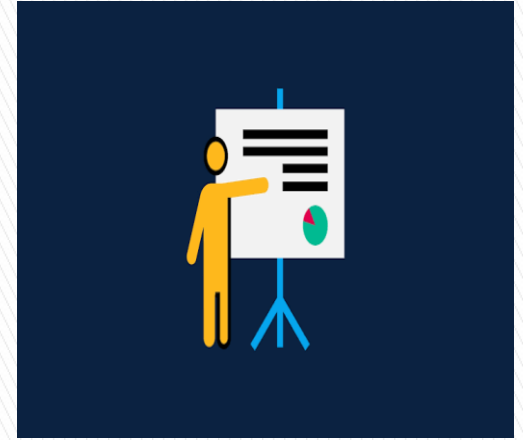
Subjective Vrs Objective Writing

- ▶ **Subjective evidence:** is a single person's opinion, evidence that you cannot evaluate, you simply have to accept or reject what the person says e.g. a Person's feelings, experience, thoughts, ideas and opinions.
 - ▶ **Subjective writing:** is found in personal essays, autobiographies and the editorial section of newspapers where journalists express their opinions, it can be based on fact, but it is one person's interpretation of that fact.
- 

Subjective Vrs Objective Writing

- ▶ **Objective Evidence:** is factual, neutral information, based on verifiable evidence as opposed to personal feelings , biases or opinions. More evaluative and emphasises facts and figures to substantiate evidence.
 - ▶ **Objective Writing:** includes reports, papers and books written by academics or journalists who report the news.
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Academic Assessments



Academic Writing Assessments



- Essays
 - Report
 - Projects
 - Presentations
 - Exams
 - ...
-
- ▶ What are the key differences between the above?

1) ESSAY :

- ▶ Definition:

- ▶ A focused short piece of prose writing that presents an author's main argument, POV or analysis on a topic. Discursive, analytical and theoretical in style.

- ▶ Aim of an essay

- ▶ To develop and organise your own ideas through writing.
- ▶ To develop your writing skills – – *professional styling*
- ▶ To express your own views about a topic.



Essay Structure

FLOW & Development of Points

- ▶ Title or Question
- ▶ Introduction
 - Explain what the essay is going to cover
 - Identify the issues to be covered
- ▶ Main Body
 - Develop an opinion, your line of reasoning, flowing prose in paragraph format. No bullet points / subheads!
- ▶ Conclusion
 - Should contain no new material – *summarise and recap.*
 - Review the key points presented
- ▶ No Visuals included in an essay
- ▶ References &/or Bibliography

2) Report :



▶ Definition

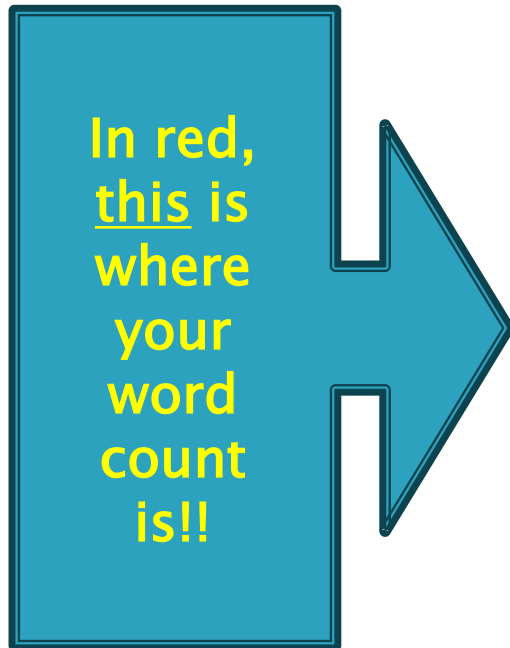
- ▶ A concise objective and evidence-based document that presents, analyses, and summarises the findings on a specific investigation, research project...

▶ Aim of a report.

- ▶ To provide specific research-based information
- ▶ To give information concisely and accurately – *reader can find info fast – aided through use of visuals*
- ▶ To demonstrate impersonal unbiased and objective info – *Objective Tone*
- ▶ To present clear findings concisely – *set word limit*
- ▶ To follow a standard structure – structured layout.
- ▶ To be 'Action Orientated' – *eg; Practical Recommendations / Actionable Steps...*

General Structure of a Report –

although there are variations...



Title Page

Abstract

Executive Summary

Contents Page(s)

1. Introduction

2. Main Body

2.1. Subsection

2.2. Subsection

2.3. Subsection

3. Conclusions

4. Recommendations

5. Reference list / Bibliography

6. Appendices

Title page

Create a title page and include:

- Module name and code
- Report title
- Your name
- Date of submission

Choose the colour scheme, icons, font, and images carefully. They should give readers a rock-solid idea of what they're about to read.

Use clean, conservative fonts: See handbook for details.

Avoid fonts that are hard to read.

You might brand your cover page template by using a case study logo, brand colours and font.

Executive summary

Executive Summary - (optional inclusion - not included in word count).

- Write this section **after** you finish the rest of your report, sum up the issues, analysis and solutions included in the report.
- An executive summary is a short description of the contents of a report. It goes before the introduction in a typical report. It should include key facts and figures from your findings, plus any recommendations.
- Here's a test to make sure you're on the right track: show the executive summary to someone not involved in the project. Do they feel like they get an overview of the report and don't have to read further to understand it? If they feel confused or like they're missing information, you need to tweak your copy.

Executive summary (not included in word count)

- A brief outline of the proposed event / activity
- Key facts + figures of your analysis / discussion
- Key facts and figures

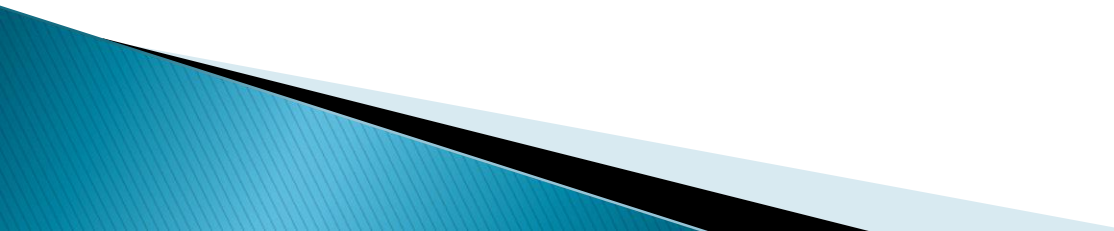


(Keep it to one page, and use paragraphs)

Table of contents

- Complete this section after you finish the rest of your report.
- List each part of the report and the page number it is on

Introduction

- ▶ Introduce the topic to be covered
 - ▶ Include 'Aim' of what you are trying to achieve e.g. Question you are trying to answer / Problem you are trying to solve.
 - ▶ Keep it **RELEVANT, FACTUAL AND BRIEF.**
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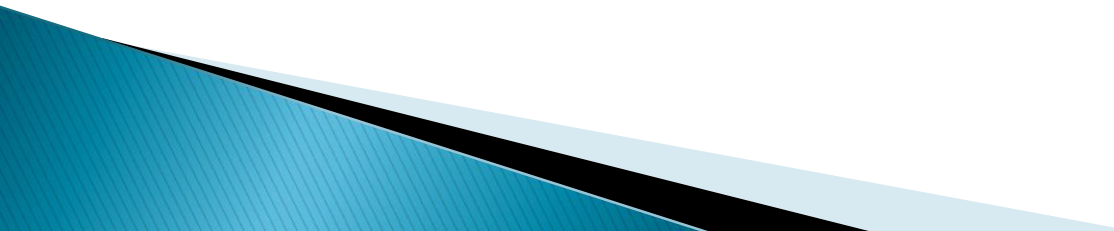
Main Body

- ▶ Analysis of information
- ▶ Develop your ideas
- ▶ Well structured and follows a logical sequence
- ▶ **Clear numbered headings and sub-headings**

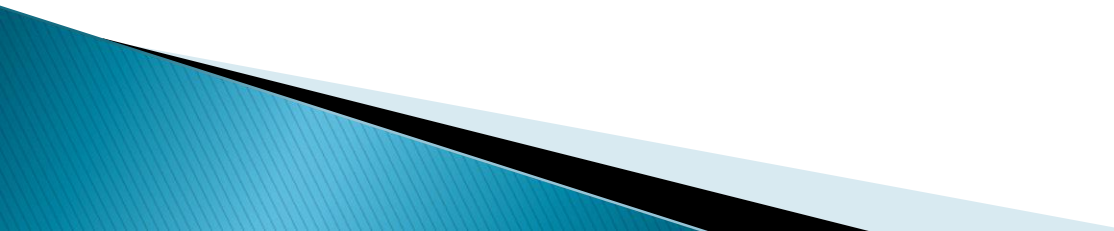
Main Body – *The Detail*

- ▶ If included research to compile the report, MUST include some methodology – e.g. research design, procedures.....
 - ▶ If includes data – Include visual aids = graphs, tables, imagery..... in this area
 - ▶ When discussing the detail / findings, MUST move from ‘descriptive’ to ‘analytical+evaluative’
 - ▶ Contextualisation, Interpretation, Evaluation....
Leading to the final section : Conclusion.
- 

Conclusions

- ▶ Key findings from the Analysis
 - ▶ What have you deduced/found out about the situation from your research and analysis.
 - ▶ Clear and concise.
 - ▶ NO NEW INFORMATION – Review only what you have found.
- 

Recommendations

- ▶ Must have a direct link to your Findings!
 - ▶ Forward Actionable Steps / Recommendations for Improvements..... Of these consider resource and impact implications – – –SMART(?)
 - ▶ Consider topics/ideas for further research and investigation.
- 

Additional Sections

- ▶ References / Bibliography = 
- ▶ USE HAVARD! *See Study Skills Handbook / Library for advice on Referencing.*
- ▶ Use Credible Sources – avoid AI / Wiki , Writing Mills! Credible sources are going to be industry specific – Engineering Peer Reviewed articles , key professional websites and related textbooks



- ▶ Appendices =



- ▶ Not included in word count – Optional
- ▶ Additional section at the end of the report that includes supplementary detail that was *perhaps* too lengthy, complex to add within the main report – -- Any information that you feel would *support* your report, but perhaps was not strictly necessary to include in the main body. Material that may provide ‘extra’ = *additionality, transparency, depth....*

Report writing – Remember to:



- ▶ Clarify what is expected
- ▶ Decide on a clear way in which to structure the report (often given in the assignment brief)
- ▶ Follow a sequence of headings and sub-headings
- ▶ Use headings that are clear and helpful, making it easy for the reader to find information
- ▶ Place *additional* information into an Appendix

3) Projects and Portfolios



- ▶ Definition:
- ▶ Typically, an extended piece of independent writing or group research / practical work . Orientated around – field studies, experiments, placements.... Could be presented either in written or visual format *(dependant on the assessment brief task set)*

Projects and Portfolios

- ▶ Aim of a Project / Portfolio:
 - ▶ To plan, execute and document information from an investigation, practical activity or project – – eg; Placement+ Apprenticeship Documentation.
 - ▶ To provide expansive detail / context.
 - ▶ Provide clear info through use of written and visual data.
 - ▶ To sectionalise information presented (*similar to the report style*)
 - ▶ Depending on the task requirements, could be either subjective or objective in writing tone.
- 

Focus : Portfolio :

▶ NB:

A Portfolio may be considered slightly different to a Project, as it tends to be more subjective. It is normally a curated collection of independent 'practical' work.

An Academic Portfolio for you, could include; Engineering / Logistics / S.Chain experiences compiled to demonstrate your skills, progress, learning achievements over time

Would highlight breadth of experiences demonstrated, and therefore being more self reflecting / subjective in tone/style.

Examples: Learning Logs / Working Diary Entries...



4) Academic Presentations:

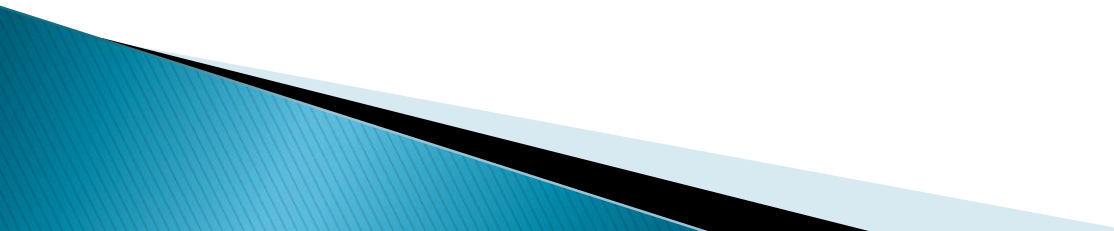


- ▶ **Definition:**
- ▶ Structured verbal address used to share information – context / findings / concepts.

Aim of an Academic Presentation:

- ▶ Must be scholarly (avoid pitch style addresses, unless stipulated in the assessment brief).
- ▶ Adopt a formal ‘verbal’ structure.
- ▶ Be clear in the information shared –knowledge, findings, theories.....
- ▶ Include appropriate visuals – eg; PowerPoints / Canva to engage / support the listener...
- ▶ Provide opportunity for Q&A.

Academic Presentations

- ▶ **Definition :**
 - ▶ An oral address used to share information / data– Findings / theory. INFORM – PERSUADE – EDUCATE!
 - ▶ **Aim of Presentation:**
 - ▶ Disseminate information verbally .
 - ▶ To inform and guide an audience as to a topic, idea, concept...
 - ▶ To engage with the audience through tone, visuals, imagery – Canva / PowerPoint..
 - ▶ Provide '*Human Element*' to academic themes.
- 

Skills for Presenting.



Aim for high impact
Clear and Concise
information conveyed.



Structure your
presentation for
Audience Retention.
Focus on your Aims /
Objectives/ Goals...



Plan your presentation
– Beginning, Middle,
End.



Be conscious of
Timings!



Do not overload your
slides – key bullet
points, not a script.



Engage with the
audience – eye contact
/ Voice Projection /
Styling / Body
Language



Overcome anxieties by
practicing -- rehearse



Ensure to reference
theory sources



5) Examinations / Tests

- ▶ Definition:



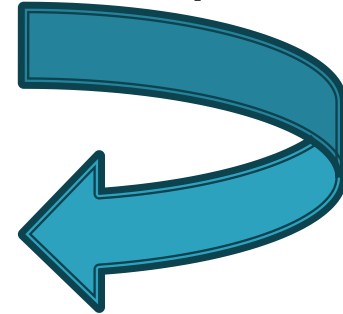
- ▶ Formal standardised tool used to measure individual understanding in a specific area, normally within time constraints. Can be Formative (ongoing exams/tests) or Summative (end of component exams/tests). Can have differing styling – eg; Open / Closed Book Exams, Multiple Choice, Long/Short Answer....

Examinations / Tests Guidance

- ▶ 1) Plan and prepare class notes ahead of any exam – **order notes**
- ▶ 2) Once organised, start by strategically planning your revision time – **Months / Weeks before the exam. Exam / Test Revision Schedule.**
- ▶ Think about your learning style – **Visuals / Linear?**
Best approach for you to learn = **MindMaps, FlashCards, Tutoring, Reading – Writing Linear Notes...**
- ▶ Practice Questions – **Past Papers.**
- ▶ Regular check-ins with support tutors – **lecturers / ALOs closer to exam / test.**
- ▶ Technology Aids? = **Revision Apps / Uni Platforms?**
- ▶ Prioritise your focus and rest periods – **Balance!**

Academic Content

- ▶ For all academic assessments – – it is important to consider your style and approach.
- ▶ Use formal English
- ▶ Write in Third–Person i.e. Refrain from using ‘I’ , ‘we’ , ‘me’
- ▶ For example, instead of ‘I found’ , write ‘It has been found that ...’ , ‘The researcher has sourced...’



Be cautious

Nothing is completely certain, use:

appears to ...

seems to ...

tends to ...

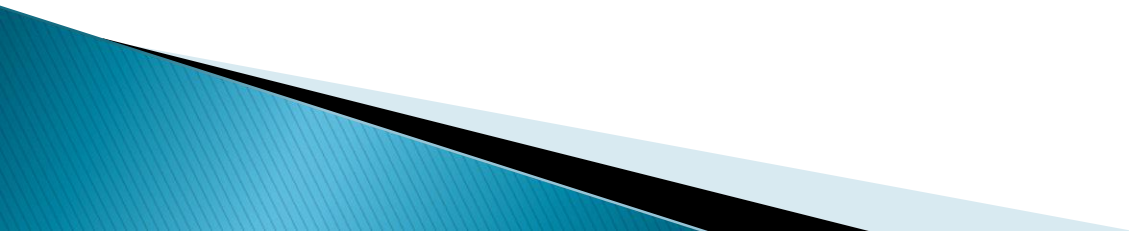
may ...

might ...

possibly ...

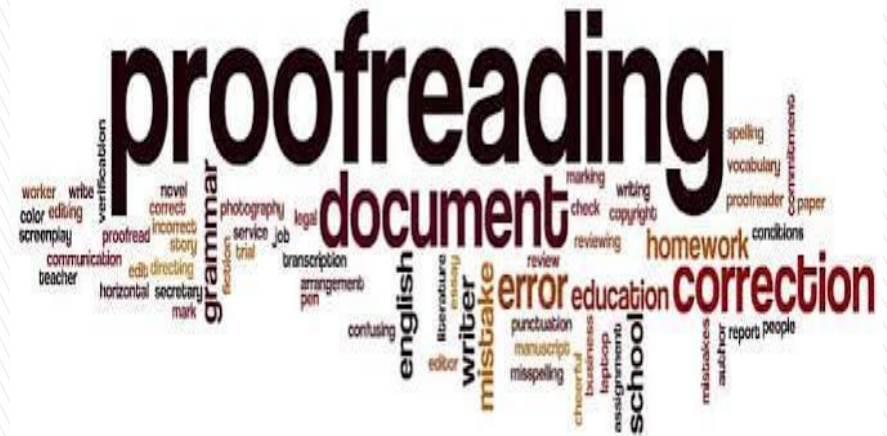
probably ...

apparently ...



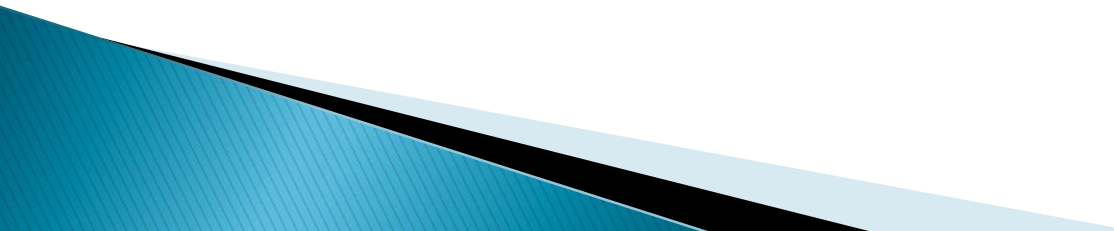
Be precise/concise

- ▶ Re-read your report, refine your writing and edit out unnecessary words, sentences and paragraphs.
- ▶ **Proof Read** YOUR WORK
- ▶ Strive to complete your work at least a few days ahead of the deadline, so that you can look over the work with a 'fresh pair of eyes' to identify any errors / omissions...



Evaluative / Analytical Writing

In evaluative analytical writing, the writer MUST:

- ▶ Provide a clear line of reasoning
 - ▶ Offer evidence or examples to support argument
 - ▶ Show that evidence is reliable
 - ▶ Show all sides to the argument
 - ▶ Demonstrate why the line of reasoning originally presented is valid.
- 

Evaluative / Analytical Writing



You need to:

- ▶ Present and compare similar findings
- ▶ Contrast opposing points
- ▶ Evaluate the significance of the similarities and differences
- ▶ Make a judgement, giving reasons
- ▶ Show evidence used to arrive at judgement
- ▶ Get the balance right.

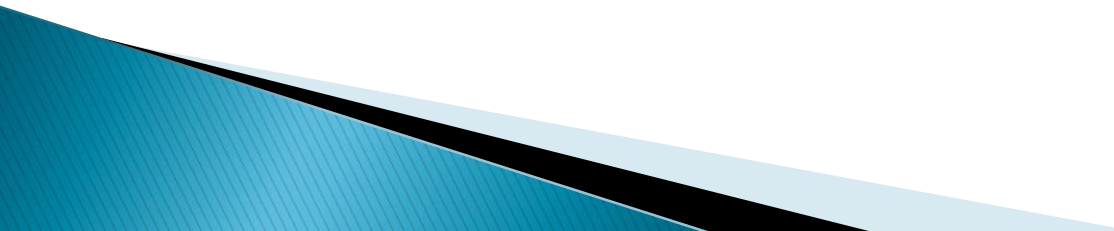
Personal Experience

In some subjects you may be asked to relate your personal experience to the subject matter being analysed and/or evaluated. However still remember to continue to write in the third Person *(unless told otherwise by your tutor)*

- ‘The author has found that ...’



Academic Keywords

- ▶ Your lecturers will use key academic terms in your assignments and expect you to write in a certain approach or style.
 - ▶ Research core academic 'engineering' terms and professional styling words.
 - ▶ **Evaluate, Analyse, Critique, Interpret, Investigate, Discuss**
 - ▶ Avoid conversational styled phrases – *colloquialisms*.
 - ▶ Be mindful of Spelling / Grammar.
- 

Academic Phrasing Guidance

▶ Focus=

“This paper focuses on.....”

“This study investigates the relationship between....”

“According to research....”

“Previous studies indicate....”

“There is limited research on....”

▶ Linking Phrases =

In Addition, Moreover, However, Furthermore....

▶ Examples =

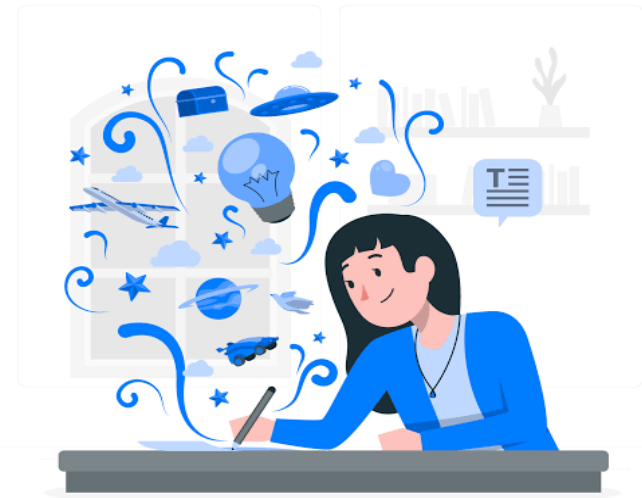
“This is exemplified by...”

▶ Contrasts =

Conversely, In contrast, Despite this

▶ To End =

To conclude, Overall



Academic Phrasing Guidance

- ▶ Colloquialisms – AVOID!
- ▶ “In a Nutshell”
- ▶ “Unpack this”
- ▶ “Basically”
- ▶ “Thing” / “Stuff”
- ▶ “Lots of ...”
- ▶ “At the end of the day”
- ▶ “On the flip side”
- ▶ “Nightmare scenario...”



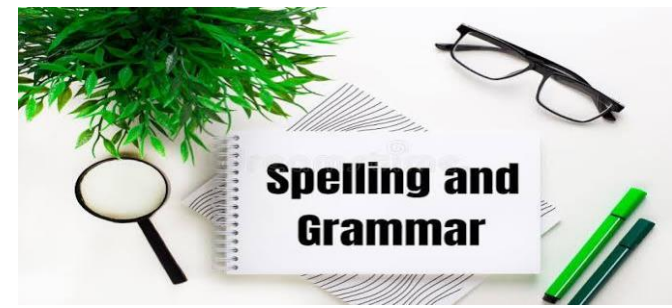
Academic Phrasing Guidance

- ▶ Be professional in your writing and accurate!
- ▶ Avoid abbreviations / Contractions

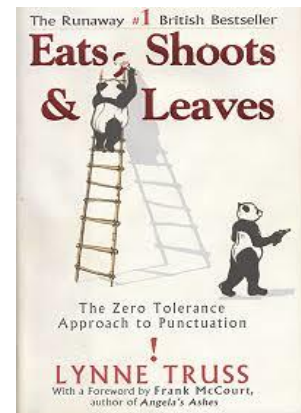
Can't = Can Not
Aren't = Are Not
Don't = Do Not

- ▶ Professional wording
 “Get” – use instead – Acquire, Obtain, Receive....
- ▶ Avoid Acronyms – e.g – For Example. Etc – Etcetera. NB – Nota bene
- ▶ *For some acronyms such as company names (British Petroleum–BP) it would be permissible on the first instance to use the full expanded name and then contract following this.*

Academic Phrasing Guidance



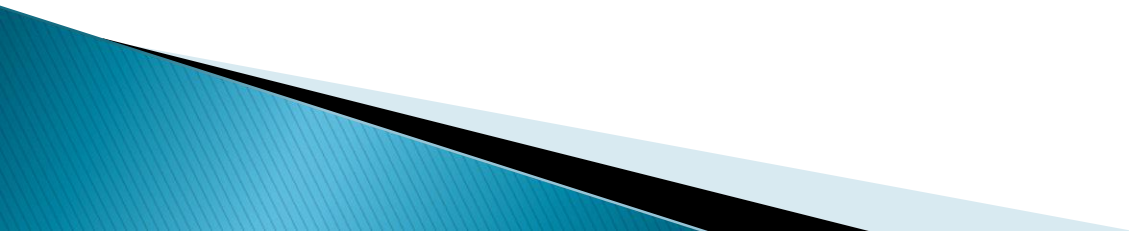
- ▶ Spelling and Grammar is vital, as not being vigilant to this can result in you losing several marks (typically 10%) and also it can result in your work having total different meaning!!
- ▶ Spelling EG: Casual – Causal / Affect – Effect / Principle – Principal / Cite – Site – Sight.....
- ▶ Grammar EG:
 - ▶ “The panda eats shoots and leaves”
 - ▶ “Woman without her man is nothing”



Academic Keywords

- ▶ **Analyse**

Examine in detail and identify important points and key features.



Academic Keywords

- ▶ **Compare**

Show how two or more things are similar;
Indicate the similarities.

Academic Keywords

► Contrast

State how two or more items are different. Indicate how the differences are significant. If appropriate, give reasons why one item or argument may be preferable or more up-to-date with latest research/findings.

Academic Keywords

- ▶ **Evaluate**

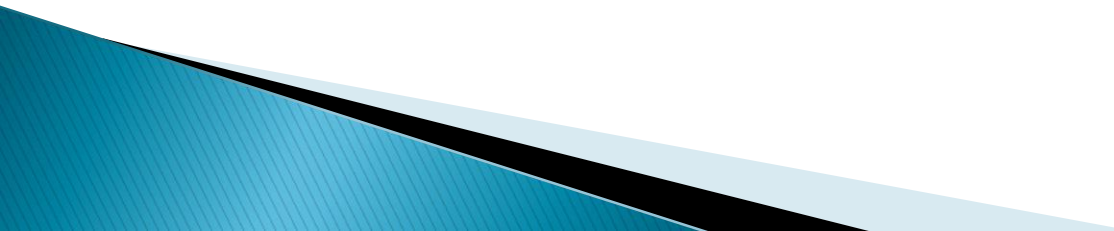
Identify key features AND Assess the importance or usefulness of something, using evidence.

Academic Keywords

► Critically Evaluate

Weigh arguments for and against something, assessing the strength of the evidence on both sides.

Use evidence to guide your assessment of which opinions, theories, models or items are preferable.



Any Questions?



Next Week

- ▶ Library Input – Digital Resources.