

# Academic Writing Centre

## Useful phrases for academic writing

Here are suggestions for using words and **phrases** which could improve your **academic** writing structure and style significantly.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- This essay will deal with the following aspects of the question...
- The aim of this essay is .....

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### 2. GIVING AN OVERVIEW OF THE ESSAY CONTENT

- In order to link.... with ....., the background to ... will be briefly outlined.
- The first part of the analysis will examine....
- The second part of this analysis will consider...
- The final level of the analysis consists of...

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### 3. MAKING A POINT

- It is clear/ noticeable that...
- It is necessary/ important/ useful/ interesting/to note/point out/ highlight/ emphasise that

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**4. EMPHASIS MARKERS** show clearly what you think is most important but allow you to avoid personal language such as 'I think'

**Adjectives:** main, crucial, important, significant, key, essential

**Nouns:** focus, element, concept, theory, aspect, part, idea, point, argument, discussion, debate

**Verbs:** to emphasise, to summarise, to focus, to highlight

Examples:

- The key aspect of this argument is
  - The most crucial point made so far
  - It is worth noting that
  - Another relevant point is that
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## 5. INTRODUCING A NEW IDEA

- Turning now to the question of
  - Bearing in mind the previous points,
  - Having considered (X)
  - With regard to
  - As far as ..... is concerned
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## 6. HEDGING

The group of 11 words called modals can help you avoid over-generalisation as they express degrees of certainty and possibility, thereby avoiding making statements which claim too much or suggest you know everything about a subject.

The 11 modals are:

CAN      MAY      COULD      MIGHT      WILL  
WOULD      SHALL      SHOULD, OUGHT TO      MUST      NEEDN'T

By far the most useful modal verbs are CAN, MAY, COULD and MIGHT. If you say something IS true you may well be guilty of over-generalisation. If you say something MAY or MIGHT be true you avoid this problem.

- It could/might be said that ....
  - It seems/appears ...
  - It is generally thought/considered .....
  - Some/many people think/believe .....
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## 7. CITING RESEARCH

- It has been found that
  - Research has shown that
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## 8. MAKING HYPOTHESES

- If, then
  - Assuming that
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## 9. STATING CONDITIONS

- Given that
  - Provided that
  - Granted that
  - If it is the case that & then,
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## 10. GIVING EXAMPLES

- For example/instance
  - In this situation/case
  - To illustrate
- 

## 11. ADDING INFORMATION

- Again/ besides/ equally important/ in addition/ further/ furthermore/ moreover
  - It must also be noted/ remembered that
- 

## 12. DISCUSSION MARKERS

- On the one hand, on the other hand
  - Although it may be true that....however
  - Whilst it is generally agreed that
  - There exists a contradiction between ..... and
  - Those in favour of/ Supporters/Advocates of
  - Those opposed to/ Critics of
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## 13. RE-PHRASING

- In other words
  - To put it another way
  - That is to say
- 

## 14. EVALUATIVE LANGUAGE.

This is used to show more clearly what you think about different points. Do you already use these words? Could you use them more?

**Positive adjectives:** remarkable, innovative, complex, interesting, profound, comprehensive, powerful, rigorous, systematic, useful, sensitive, reliable, logical,

**Negative adjectives:** flawed, modest, unsatisfactory, inadequate, limited, restricted

**Nouns:** synthesis, survey, topic, study, review, history, concept, area, theme, overview, analysis, system

**Verbs:** explain, discuss, study, present, describe, bring into focus, consider, explore, illuminate, introduce, analyse, constitute

Examples:

- The UNO has published an interesting survey...
  - It presents a useful concept...
  - However, the study is limited in that...
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## 15. REPEATING

In general, DON'T! Try to organise your writing so that you stick to one point at a time. But if you must, you can use **phrases** such as:

- To return to an earlier point
  - As noted before/above
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## 16. SUMMING UP

- Briefly, we can say/ it can be said that
  - To sum up
  - Hence/therefore/accordingly/ consequently
  - The evidence suggests, therefore
  - In general what this means/ suggests/ indicates is
  - It is clear from the above that
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## 17. CONCLUSION

- To conclude/In conclusion,