

## Academic writing tips with Academic Word List vocabulary

Use some of the words below to give advice on good academic writing.

abstract  
accurate/ accuracy/ inaccurate/ inaccuracy  
adequate/ inadequate/ inadequacy  
advocate  
aid  
alternative  
analysis/ analyse  
approach/ approachable  
approximate/ approximation  
assign/ assignment  
assume/ assumption  
attribute  
authority/ authoritative  
bias/ biased  
category/ categorize  
chart  
clarify/ clarity/ clarification  
coherence/ coherent/ incoherent  
comprehend/ comprehensive  
concept/ conceptual/ conceptualise  
conclude/ conclusion/ (in)conclusive  
consent/ consensual  
contact/ contactable  
contradict/ contradiction  
controversial/ controversy  
correspond/ correspondence  
criteria  
define/ definition  
diverse/ diversity  
eliminate/ elimination  
ensure  
extract  
format  
fundamental  
grant  
highlight  
ignorant/ ignorance  
impact  
incorporate/ incorporation  
infer/ inference  
instance  
issue  
label  
minimal/ minimise/ minimum  
norm/ protocol  
accompany  
acknowledge/ acknowledgement  
adjust  
affect  
alter/ alteration  
ambiguous/ ambiguity/ unambiguous  
appendix/ appendices  
appropriate/ inappropriate/ appropriateness  
arbitrary/ arbitrariness  
assistance  
attach/ attached/ unattached/ attachment  
author  
aware/ unaware/ awareness  
brief/ brevity  
chapter  
cite/ citation  
clause  
compile/ compilation  
comprise  
confer/ conference  
conflict/ conflicting  
consistent/ consistency/ inconsistent  
content  
contribute/ contributor/ contribution  
convention/ conventional/ unconventional  
credit  
data/ figures/ statistics  
differentiate  
draft  
emphasize/ emphasis  
error  
feature  
framework  
goal  
guideline  
hypothesis/ hypotheses/ hypothetical  
illustration/ illustrate  
imply/ implication  
indicate/ indicative  
insert/ insertion  
interpret/ interpretation  
journal  
methodology  
modify/ modification  
objective

option/ optional  
paragraph/ paragraphing  
precise/ precision/ imprecise  
process  
publish/ publication(s)/ (un)published  
reject/ rejection  
scope  
source  
straightforward  
style/ stylistic  
subordinate  
summarize  
thesis/ theses

overall  
precede  
principal  
proportion/ proportionate/ disproportionate  
quote/ quotation  
relevance/ relevant/ irrelevance/ irrelevant  
significant/ significance/ insignificant  
specify/ specific  
structure/ structural  
submit/ submission  
sufficient/ insufficient  
theory/ theoretical  
utilise/ utilisation

**Useful words for giving advice**

avoid  
because/ as  
best  
can  
difficult  
don't  
example  
generally  
if  
important  
impossible  
main  
make sure  
may  
must  
need  
never  
probably  
require/ requirements  
should  
some people believe  
sometimes  
therefore  
unless  
usually  
worth

*Ask about any words above you don't understand, couldn't link to the speaking activity, etc.*

Put at least one of the words above into each of the gaps below to make good advice about academic writing.

1. "The \_\_\_\_\_" is an alternative to "I" in academic writing, though it can seem pretentious.
2. A \_\_\_\_\_ can be labelled "Fig. 1", but shouldn't be referred to as "The figure", as that means "The number".
3. A good title can really \_\_\_\_\_ how many people read your paper, and therefore also influence how often your paper is cited in the future.
4. A second \_\_\_\_\_ of your writing should be edited versions of the first attempt, not the original version with notes. However, you can mark the changes to make them stand out, by using red fonts etc.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ of data should be written after the diagram or table, perhaps following a more basic description.
6. Any \_\_\_\_\_ made in researching or writing the paper should be written near the beginning of a paper.
7. Don't confuse a summary and a \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Don't confuse magazines and academic (usually meaning peer-reviewed) \_\_\_\_\_ – New Scientist and National Geographic, to give two examples, aren't good models for your own academic writing.
9. Email approaches to academics who you have no connection to should be polite but state the reason for \_\_\_\_\_ them quite near the beginning of the email.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ your ideas while also sounding sufficiently academic can be difficult.
11. If you \_\_\_\_\_ a quote (to make it understandable out of context or to shorten it), any changes should be marked with "..." and "[ ]".
12. If you want to \_\_\_\_\_ a particular government policy, that should usually be left until the final conclusion.
13. \_\_\_\_\_ grammar and information in citations can be marked with the expression "[sic]" in square brackets.
14. \_\_\_\_\_ supporting evidence is the most common reason for rejecting academic papers, with being too similar to other research being the second most common cause for having a paper turned down.
15. It can be difficult to make your language sufficiently academic and diplomatic without making the meaning \_\_\_\_\_.
16. It's sometimes worth pasting things into an email rather than including an \_\_\_\_\_, as it saves formatting problems and being blocked by people's spam filters.
17. It's worth mentioning \_\_\_\_\_ when sources are particularly \_\_\_\_\_ and so should be taken more seriously.
18. Most publishers automatically \_\_\_\_\_ permission to quote from their publications, but it can be difficult and time consuming to get in contact with the right person.
19. Nowadays, you will probably need \_\_\_\_\_ to use long or many extracts from a single publication. However, it's not always obvious who to write to in order to get such permission.

20. Only very long papers need \_\_\_\_\_ – shorter ones should be just be divided into sections.
21. Perhaps the most important factors to make sure that your paper has an \_\_\_\_\_ are its title and where it is published, with publishing the right ideas and the right time (matching the zeitgeist) also being important.
22. Phrasal verbs and other idioms are generally not \_\_\_\_\_ in academic writing, unless there is no other way of saying something.
23. Professors obviously won't correct the grammar in your essays, but it can be worth asking for extra feedback on your \_\_\_\_\_.
24. Some people believe it is impossible to avoid \_\_\_\_\_ in academic writing, so you should disclose all information which could affect your judgement.
25. Some publications demand an \_\_\_\_\_ summarizing the content of your paper, perhaps to be used on the index page of their website.
26. Some publications have their own \_\_\_\_\_ on how to write for them, although some also refer you to style manuals such as the APA or The Chicago Manual of Style.
27. Starting a new paragraph is never \_\_\_\_\_ – it is usually due to changing topic (in some way), but also can be because the paragraph has gone on too long.
28. The \_\_\_\_\_ of a proof-reader doesn't usually need to be mentioned in your paper.
29. The \_\_\_\_\_ that online editors want can vary, including .doc (rather than more recent versions), .txt, or just the text pasted into an email.
30. The main thing to decide before starting to write an academic paper is your \_\_\_\_\_, in other words what you want to achieve by publishing that information in that way.
31. The most important thing is to \_\_\_\_\_ that your ideas can be understood.
32. The punctuation etc of an academic paper may have to be \_\_\_\_\_ to meet the requirements of a particular publication.
33. When style guides \_\_\_\_\_ each other it is usually best to follow the APA's advice, unless the guidelines from the publication state otherwise.
34. Word limits are rarely \_\_\_\_\_, so you should stick to them exactly.
35. You can sometimes include \_\_\_\_\_ of help with your research and/ or paper such as a list of people who you want to thank.
36. You must \_\_\_\_\_ where your ideas come from, even if you aren't directly quoting someone.
37. You need to be \_\_\_\_\_ with use of not of "I", American or British English, referencing conventions, etc.
38. You need to \_\_\_\_\_ between direct quotes and paraphrases of people's ideas.
39. You need to use \_\_\_\_\_ sources, for example not using the same dictionary for definitions throughout.
40. You should show an \_\_\_\_\_ of the limits of your research and the ability to come to conclusion based on it, for example in a section on this topic.

**Mixed answers**

*These words can go in the gaps above (without needing to change the grammar).*

- abstract
- acknowledge
- acknowledgement
- adjusted
- advocate
- affect
- aid/ assistance
- alter
- ambiguous.
- analysis
- appropriate
- approximate
- arbitrary
- assignment
- assumptions
- attachment
- author
- authoritative
- awareness
- bias
- chapters
- chart
- conclusion
- consent
- consistent
- contacting
- contradict
- differentiate
- diverse
- draft
- emphasising
- ensure
- format
- goals/ objectives
- grant
- guidelines
- impact
- inaccurate
- inadequate
- journals

*Check with the suggested answers or as a class. Other answers are possible, so please check any which you filled with different words.*

### Suggested answers

1. "The \_\_\_\_\_ **author** \_\_\_\_\_" is an alternative to "I" in academic writing, though it can seem pretentious.
2. A \_\_\_\_\_ **chart** \_\_\_\_\_ can be labelled "Fig. 1", but shouldn't be referred to as "The figure", as that means "The number".
3. A good title can really \_\_\_\_\_ **affect** \_\_\_\_\_ how many people read your paper, and therefore also influence how often your paper is cited in the future.
4. A second \_\_\_\_\_ **draft** \_\_\_\_\_ of your writing should be edited versions of the first attempt, not the original version with notes. However, you can mark the changes to make them stand out, by using red fonts etc.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ **analysis** \_\_\_\_\_ of data should be written after the diagram or table, perhaps following a more basic description.
6. Any \_\_\_\_\_ **assumptions** \_\_\_\_\_ made in researching or writing the paper should be written near the beginning of a paper.
7. Don't confuse a summary and a \_\_\_\_\_ **conclusion** \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Don't confuse magazines and academic (usually meaning peer-reviewed) \_\_\_\_\_ **journals** \_\_\_\_\_ – New Scientist and National Geographic, to give two examples, aren't good models for your own academic writing.
9. Email approaches to academics who you have no connection to should be polite but state the reason for \_\_\_\_\_ **contacting** \_\_\_\_\_ them quite near the beginning of the email.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ **Emphasising** \_\_\_\_\_ your ideas while also sounding sufficiently academic can be difficult.
11. If you \_\_\_\_\_ **alter** \_\_\_\_\_ a quote (to make it understandable out of context or to shorten it), any changes should be marked with "..." and "[ ]".
12. If you want to \_\_\_\_\_ **advocate** \_\_\_\_\_ a particular government policy, that should usually be left until the final conclusion.
13. \_\_\_\_\_ **Inaccurate** \_\_\_\_\_ grammar and information in citations can be marked with the expression "[sic]" in square brackets.
14. \_\_\_\_\_ **Inadequate** \_\_\_\_\_ supporting evidence is the most common reason for rejecting academic papers, with being too similar to other research being the second most common cause for having a paper turned down.
15. It can be difficult to make your language sufficiently academic and diplomatic without making the meaning \_\_\_\_\_ **ambiguous** \_\_\_\_\_.
16. It's sometimes worth pasting things into an email rather than including an \_\_\_\_\_ **attachment** \_\_\_\_\_, as it saves formatting problems and being blocked by people's spam filters.
17. It's worth mentioning when sources are particularly \_\_\_\_\_ **authoritative** \_\_\_\_\_ and so should be taken more seriously.
18. Most publishers automatically \_\_\_\_\_ **grant** \_\_\_\_\_ permission to quote from their publications, but it can be difficult and time consuming to get in contact with the right person.
19. Nowadays, you will probably need \_\_\_\_\_ **consent** \_\_\_\_\_ to use long or many extracts from a single publication. However, it's not always obvious who to write to in order to get such permission.

20. Only very long papers need \_\_\_\_\_ **chapters** \_\_\_\_\_  
– shorter ones should be just be divided into sections.
21. Perhaps the most important factors to make sure that your paper has an \_\_\_\_\_ **impact** \_\_\_\_\_ are its title and where it is published, with publishing the right ideas and the right time (matching the zeitgeist) also being important.
22. Phrasal verbs and other idioms are generally not \_\_\_\_\_ **appropriate** \_\_\_\_\_ in academic writing, unless there is no other way of saying something.
23. Professors obviously won't correct the grammar in your essays, but it can be worth asking for extra feedback on your \_\_\_\_\_ **assignment** \_\_\_\_\_.
24. Some people believe it is impossible to avoid \_\_\_\_\_ **bias** \_\_\_\_\_ in academic writing, so you should disclose all information which could affect your judgement.
25. Some publications demand an \_\_\_\_\_ **abstract** \_\_\_\_\_ summarizing the content of your paper, perhaps to be used on the index page of their website.
26. Some publications have their own \_\_\_\_\_ **guidelines** \_\_\_\_\_ on how to write for them, although some also refer you to style manuals such as the APA or The Chicago Manual of Style.
27. Starting a new paragraph is never \_\_\_\_\_ **arbitrary** \_ – it is usually due to changing topic (in some way), but also can be because the paragraph has gone on too long.
28. The \_\_\_\_\_ **aid/ assistance** \_\_\_\_\_ of a proof-reader doesn't usually need to be mentioned in your paper.
29. The \_\_\_\_\_ **format** \_\_\_\_\_ that online editors want can vary, including .doc (rather than more recent versions), .txt, or just the text pasted into an email.
30. The main thing to decide before starting to write an academic paper is your \_\_\_\_\_ **goals/ objectives** \_\_\_\_\_, in other words what you want to achieve by publishing that information in that way.
31. The most important thing is to \_\_\_\_\_ **ensure** \_\_\_\_\_ that your ideas can be understood.
32. The punctuation etc of an academic paper may have to be \_\_\_\_\_ **adjusted** \_\_\_\_\_ to meet the requirements of a particular publication.
33. When style guides \_\_\_\_\_ **contradict** \_\_\_\_\_ each other it is usually best to follow the APA's advice, unless the guidelines from the publication state otherwise.
34. Word limits are rarely \_\_\_\_\_ **approximate** \_\_\_\_\_, so you should stick to them exactly.
35. You can sometimes include \_\_\_\_\_ **acknowledgement** \_\_\_\_\_ of help with your research and/ or paper such as a list of people who you want to thank.
36. You must \_\_\_\_\_ **acknowledge** \_\_\_\_\_ where your ideas come from, even if you aren't directly quoting someone.
37. You need to be \_\_\_\_\_ **consistent** \_\_\_\_\_ with use of not of "I", American or British English, referencing conventions, etc.
38. You need to \_\_\_\_\_ **differentiate** \_\_\_\_\_ between direct quotes and paraphrases of people's ideas.
39. You need to use \_\_\_\_\_ **diverse** \_\_\_\_\_ sources, for example not using the same dictionary for definitions throughout.
40. You should show an \_\_\_\_\_ **awareness** \_\_\_\_\_ of the limits of your research and the ability to come to conclusion based on it, for example in a section on this topic.