



**اللجنة الوطنية للتعليم العالي عن بعد**  
**La commission nationale de l'enseignement supérieur à distance**



# ACADEMIC WRITING AND WRITING A RESEARCH PAPER



## WEEK 02, SEQUENCE 01: CHARACTERISTICS AND TYPES OF ACADEMIC WRITING

### PART 01: CHARACTERISTICS OF ACADEMIC WRITING

**"Clear thinking leads to  
clear writing; clear writing  
leads to clear thinking."  
- Muriel Spark**

# INTRODUCTION

- English is now the Lingua Franca of Academia. It is widely accepted that it is the language of Science, Technology, and Education. Its mastery gives access to new and recent information.
- University Teachers, Research Students, Academics and Scientists from different fields need to **PUBLISH** in English to give their works a chance to reach the scientific world community so as to be recognised by peers.
- Therefore, they all need to master **English Academic Writing**.

# 1. ACADEMIC WRITING: DEFINITIONS

- Academic writing is a **FORMAL STYLE** of writing used in higher education institutions and scholarly materials of all sorts.
- Academic writing follows the same writing process as other types of texts, but it has **specific conventions** in terms of **content, structure, and style**.
- *“Academic writing is the process of sharing original research with other scholars in accordance with certain standard rules. This process requires correctly following the steps of scientific academic writing.”* (Akkaya & Aydin, 2018, p.128)

## 2. CHARACTERISTICS OF ACADEMIC WRITING

- Academic writing displays a set of characteristics which distinguish it from other types of writings.
- Here is a list of the main characteristics:



1. **COMPLEXITY**: Academic Writing displays a more complex grammar than spoken language and is lexically dense using more noun-based phrases. It includes more subordinate clauses, more attributive adjectives, and more passive forms than spoken language.
2. **FORMALITY**: Academic writing is more formal than other types of writing (non-academic writing). It uses more complex sentences defining genre and formal vocabulary.

For example:

'somewhat' is more formal than 'a bit', 'insufficient' is more formal than 'not enough'



3. **PRECISION:** Academic writing is based on research. It reports facts. Statements and arguments need to be supported by evidence. It is important to give credit to authors properly.
  
4. **ACCURACY:** Academic writing is accurate both as concerns the use of vocabulary and grammar. Choosing the correct word and the appropriate grammatical form is very important to avoid approximations.

For Example:

Choose the correct word, among "meeting", "assembly", "gathering" or "conference" makes your text more accurate.

5. **STRUCTURE:** Academic writing is structured. The structure of a given writing piece depends on the genre of writing.

For example:

An essay will have an **introduction, body paragraphs, and a conclusion** while

A research paper will most often follow the **IMRAD structure** (Introduction, Methods and Materials, Results, Discussion, and Conclusion sections)

6. **OBJECTIVITY**: Academic writing uses neutral words which show neither emotion nor attitude. The emphasis is on the information and the arguments, rather than on the author. Academic texts use more nouns and non-evaluative adjectives rather than verbs and adverbs.

For example:

- Instead of writing ‘I believe the model is valid, based on these findings’, write ‘These findings indicate that the model is valid’.
- Instead of writing ‘Parents who smoke are obviously abusing their children’, write ‘Secondhand smoke has some harmful effects on children’s health’.

Source: <https://www.sydney.edu.au/students/writing.html>

7. **HEDGING**: Academic writing is known to be factual. However, it is important to use cautious language, also called "hedging" to make decisions about the stance on a particular subject, or the strength of the claims.

For example: you can use

- Introductory verbs such as seem, tend, look like, appear to be, think, believe, doubt, be sure, indicate, suggest
- Modal adverbs such as certainly, definitely, clearly, probably, possibly, perhaps, conceivably
- That clauses such as “It could be the case that” , “It might be suggested that” or “There is every hope that” .

8. **RESPONSIBILITY:** Academic writing is responsible. It aims at demonstrating an understanding of the theoretical backgrounds. Academic writers are required to provide evidence and justification for, any claims they make.

For example:

- Instead of writing ‘Language is, in my view, clearly something social’, write ‘As Halliday (1973) argues, language is intrinsically social’.

Source: <https://www.sydney.edu.au/students/writing.html>

# CONCLUSION

- While producing a piece of academic writing you need to make sure your text includes all the previously presented characteristics.
- Doing so will give you better chances to be published in scholarly journals.

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Akkaya, A. & Aydin, G. (2018). Academics' Views on the Characteristics of Academic Writing. *Educational Policy Analysis and Strategic Research*, 13(2), 128-160. doi: 10.29329/epasr.2018.143.7
- Alexander, O., Argent, S. and Spencer, J. (2008) *EAP Essentials: A teacher's guide to principles and practice*. Reading: Garnet Publishing Ltd
- Bailey, S. (2018). *Academic writing: A Handbook for International Students*. Routledge
- Winkler A.,C., & Metherell, J.R. (2012). *Writing the Research Paper: A Handbook*, Cengage Learning. the United States of America
- Yassine, S, (2021) *Writing and Publishing Academic Papers in English* , Séminaires des Formations Doctorales, 2021, Université de Bejaia
- Yassine, S. (2022) *Scientific Writing and EAP Requirements: Guidelines for Social Sciences and Humanities Researchers*. Premier Workshop national organisé par le Laboratoire d'Aménagement et d'Enseignement de la Langue Amazighe de l'Université Mouloud Mammeri de Tizi-Ouzou en partenariat avec le Centre d'Etudes Maghrébine en Algérie.



**Thank you  
for your  
attention**