

301 Feedback Glossary

How did your recent assignments and exams go?
Have you got some feedback to work on this Semester?

This Glossary covers some of the more common areas of feedback with a few suggestions of what you might want to do follow up on your feedback and develop your skills.

Introductions

Introductions in academic work usually follow a 'funnel' structure, ie. they start broad before moving on to provide some context and explanation, before focusing in on the specific and narrow area of focus with a short and succinct 'mission statement'.

Go to: an Academic Writing Workshop or 1:1 Study Skills Tutorial

Academic Style

Academic writing uses a more formal register of language, which means avoiding colloquial or casual expressions, avoiding contractions and abbreviated words and limiting your use of the first person 'I' form.

Go to: an Academic Writing Workshop or 1:1 Study Skills Tutorial

Clarity of Writing

When communicating complex ideas, it is important to aim for clarity in your writing. Try to break some of your longer sentences up into shorter chunks that will get your points across more clearly, and avoid using overly-complex language where possible.

Go to: an Academic Writing Workshop or 1:1 Study Skills Tutorial

Understanding the Question

Each instruction word (analyse, evaluate, compare and contrast, describe, summarise, examine, etc.) relates to a specific approach to an assignment, so make sure you understand what is required and whether you have really answered the question.

Go to: an Exam Technique Workshop or 1:1 Study Skills Tutorial

Critical analysis

In academic writing it is important to go beyond description to engage critically with evidence and sources. Critical analysis usually involves a systematic process of questioning that allows you to identify the strengths and limitations of a source as well as areas of agreement and/or disagreement with other sources.

Go to: a Critical Thinking Workshop or 1:1 Study Skills Tutorial

Arguments

Arguments need to be fully supported through the use of appropriate and reliable data, evidence or sources.

Go to: a Developing Your Argument Workshop or 1:1 Study Skills Tutorial

Topic sentence

The first sentence of a paragraph typically sets out the topic and controlling idea for the whole paragraph. The topic is the general area of focus; the controlling idea is the specific angle or perspective taken on it. As a whole, the topic sentence tells the reader what to expect from the paragraph.

Go to: an Academic Writing Workshop or 1:1 Study Skills Tutorial

Paragraph structure

Most paragraphs follow the rule of 'unity'; that is, they only deal with one aspect of a topic at a time. Use a topic sentence to define what the paragraph will cover, then make sure that each sentence stays on topic.

Go to: an Essay Structure Workshop or 1:1 Study Skills Tutorial

Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is an important skill to demonstrate to the reader not only that you have found and referred to a particular source, but also that you have understood that source. It demonstrates your interpretation, which requires you to use your own words to explain the source to a reader.

Go to: a Paraphrasing Workshop or 1:1 Study Skills Tutorial

Figures/graphs

Think carefully about how your figures or graphs are formatted, about the number of decimal points needed for your axes, the labels that you use and whether you have included all/only relevant information. Does the information in the figure correspond to the information in the text?

Go to: a MASH Presenting Data Workshop or MASH 1:1 Appointment

Tables

When presenting your results in tables, think carefully about how they are formatted, about the number of decimal points needed and whether you have included all/only relevant information. Does the information in the table correspond to the information in the text?

Go to: a MASH Presenting Data Workshop or MASH 1:1 Appointment

Proofreading

Try to leave a gap (preferably overnight) between finishing your writing and proofreading to allow yourself to proofread in an objective and critical way.

Go to: an Academic Writing Self-Diagnostic Workshop or 1:1 Study Skills Tutorial