

Academic Language and Principles: Seminar Materials

Section A: Academic Language and Style

Why are the following sentences 'not academic style'? Re-write the sentences in an appropriate academic style.

Examples 1-6 are taken from *Academic Writing and Grammar for Students* by Alex Osmond (2013, Sage Study Skills).

1. It is widely accepted that election campaigns go the extra mile in their final weeks.

.....

2. The company, in an attempt to cut costs, fired 5% of the workforce in 2004.

.....

3. Bradshaw (2009) decides that the conclusion is clear as crystal: sporting activity should be promoted more to kids at a young age.

.....

4. The creation of the NHS by the wartime government of Britain was a towering, even dizzying, achievement.

.....

5. Recent coverage of women's sport in the UK has, sadly, paid almost no attention whatsoever to athletic ability, instead, focusing – in a puerile way – on the appearance of the sportswomen.

.....

6. You can't understand the conflict between Russia and Georgia in 2008 without an awareness of the region's history.

.....

7. The President stated that he wouldn't invade as the UN hasn't agreed on a course of action.

.....

8. What can we learn from this?

.....

9. Inflation has gone down by loads over the last year or so.

.....

10. Without doubt these findings clearly indicate that this cyclical pattern will continue for the next 5 years.

.....

11. The government did not even try to protect the ethnic group when they were being attacked!

.....

12. In conclusion, this essay has attempted to demonstrate how the marketing strategy of Ryan Air has failed in three key areas. An additional point that supports this assertion is that other low cost airlines (Easyjet; Flybe) have adopted alternative marketing strategies and been considerably more successful over the same time period.

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Section B: Discussion Questions

1. What should a good introduction include?
2. What should a well written paragraph include?
3. What should a good conclusion include?
4. What does a logically constructed and well written paragraph include?
5. Why is referencing vital?
6. What is hedging and why is it necessary?
7. Where does your opinion usually appear in a piece of academic writing in the UK?
8. How do these features of writing help the reader to follow your argument more easily?
 - Topic sentences
 - Linking words
 - Links between paragraphs

Academic Language and Principles: Seminar Materials: Answers

Section A: Academic Language and Style

Why are the following sentences 'not academic style'? Re-write the sentences in an appropriate academic style.

1. It is widely accepted that election campaigns go the extra mile in their final weeks.
It is widely accepted that the election campaigns increase their efforts in the final weeks.
2. The company, in an attempt to cut costs, fired 5% of the workforce in 2004.
The company, in an attempt to cut costs, terminated the contracts of 5% of the workforce in 2004.
3. Bradshaw (2009) decides that the conclusion is clear as crystal: sporting activity should be promoted more to kids at a young age.
Bradshaw (2009) decides that the conclusion is clear: sporting activity should be promoted more to children.
4. The creation of the NHS by the wartime government of Britain was a towering, even dizzying, achievement.
The creation of the NHS by the wartime government of Britain was a remarkable achievement.
5. Recent coverage of women's sport in the UK has, sadly, paid almost no attention whatsoever to athletic ability, instead, focusing – in a puerile way – on the appearance of the sportswomen.
Recent coverage of women's sport in the UK has, a variety of research concludes (Darking 2009; Henderson, 2011), not focussed sufficiently on the sporting ability of sportswomen.
6. You can't understand the conflict between Russia and Georgia in 2008 without an awareness of the region's history.
An awareness of the region's history is needed to understand the conflict between and Georgia in 2008.
7. The President stated that he wouldn't invade as the UN hasn't agreed on a course of action.
The President stated that he would not invade as the UN has not agreed on a course of action.
8. What can we learn from this?
The lessons to be learnt from this are ...
9. Inflation has gone down by loads over the last year or so.
Inflation has decreased by 3% during the last 18 months.

10. Without doubt these findings clearly indicate that this cyclical pattern will continue for the next 5 years.

Based on these findings, it seems reasonable to suggest that this cyclical pattern will continue for the next 5 years.

11. The government did not even try to protect the ethnic group when they were being attacked!

There was widespread criticism (Jones 2012; Smith 2013; Taylor 2013) of the government when failed to offer any protection to the ethnic group when they were being attacked.

12. In conclusion, this essay has attempted to demonstrate how the marketing strategy of Ryan Air has failed in three key areas. An additional point that supports this assertion is that other low cost airlines (Easyjet; Flybe) have adopted alternative marketing strategies and been considerably more successful over the same time period.

In conclusion, this essay has attempted to demonstrate how the marketing strategy of Ryan Air has failed in three key areas. (Do not include new information in a conclusion)

Section B: Discussion Questions

1. An Introduction may include:

- brief background and/or current situation, including differing opinions on the topic
- definition of a key term (this may appear in the first paragraph of the main body)
- outline / main aim of the essay
- writer's position

2. A well written paragraph should include:

- a topic sentence clearly stating the main argument/point of that paragraph
- further explanation of that main point and development of the key argument, including reference to expert sources to strengthen the argument
- reference to expert sources may include opinions, examples, statistics and data
- the writer's view will also be clearly expressed integrated with the source information
- a concluding sentence (but this is not always necessary)

3. The conclusion may include:

- summary of the essay's key points
- statement clarifying the author's general conclusion and why it is significant, referring back to the essay question
- wider implications and future action

4. Referencing is vital to avoid plagiarism

5. Hedging is the use of cautious language and is used to soften or strengthen claims

6. The writer's opinion is usually given in the introduction in the form of a thesis statement and is then shown throughout the main body when developing arguments. It is also repeated in the conclusion.

7. Topic sentences tell the reader what the main argument/point/aim of each paragraph is so that the reader can clearly see when each point appears in the main body.

Linking words help the reader to follow the development of arguments within each paragraph, showing how one sentence links to the next. However, linking words should not be overused and are not needed at the beginning of every sentence.

Linking between paragraphs is used before or at the start of topic sentences and show the reader how one paragraph leads on to the next one, so that the reader can follow the progression of arguments throughout the main body.