

The Research Project

Introduction to Academic Writing

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Undergraduate Diploma in
Business Administration

Module- Research and Academic Studies...

Help you develop the skills to succeed in the writing task
(Using practical examples as much as possible)

- Learn to write as clearly and accurately as possible
- Learn to question and evaluate everything you read (is it relevant and reliable?)
- Learn to cite and refer carefully the sources that make up all your ideas
- Learn presenting your work through a standard system



TEXT Books for this module....

Core textbooks

- McMillan, K. and Weyers, J. (2013). How to Write for University: Academic Writing for Success. Pearson.
- Pears, R. and Shields, G. (2019). Cite Them Right. The Essential Referencing Guide. Macmillan Education

Supplementary textbooks

- Bailey, S. (2019). The Essentials of Academic Writing for International Students. 3rd ed. Routledge.
- Cottrell, S. (2019). The Study Skills Handbook. 5th ed. Red Globe Press.
- Locker, K. O., & Kaczmarek, S. K. (2014). Business Communication: Building Critical Skills. McGraw-Hill Education.
- Swetnam, D. and Swetnam, R. (2020). Writing Your Dissertation. 3rd ed. Plymouth: How to Books.





What shall we be addressing in this 1st session:

- The importance of practical writing skills in the field
- The need for research and academic writing in business administration
- Different types of academic writing
- The formats of long and short writing tasks
- The components of academic writing
- Other standard text features
- Writing in paragraphs
- Accessing various types of sources
- How prefixes and suffixes work

1.1 Why is writing important in business administration...

Shows effective communication

- Articulate: you can express your thoughts in a clear manner
- Organized: Show you are able to draft a thought-out in an argument
- Competent: Able to demonstrate logic and reason



B U S I N E S S

W R I T I N G

Why do we use writing in business administration?

- Emails- follow up, request
- Letter- cover letter, letter to a client or prospective clients
- Report- summary of report or analysis, a meeting overview
- An academic task



3 Important Components:

- Audience (Who?)
- Purpose: (Why?)
- Clarity: (How?)



Audience

Internal

- colleague/superior
- Individual/groups

External

- consultant/vendor
- existing/prospective client



Let's think in groups

What would be 5 main differences in writing an e-mail
to...

Group 1

Existing/ prospective client

Group 2

Inferior/superior colleague

Group 3

Colleague/superior

Group 4

Supplier/client

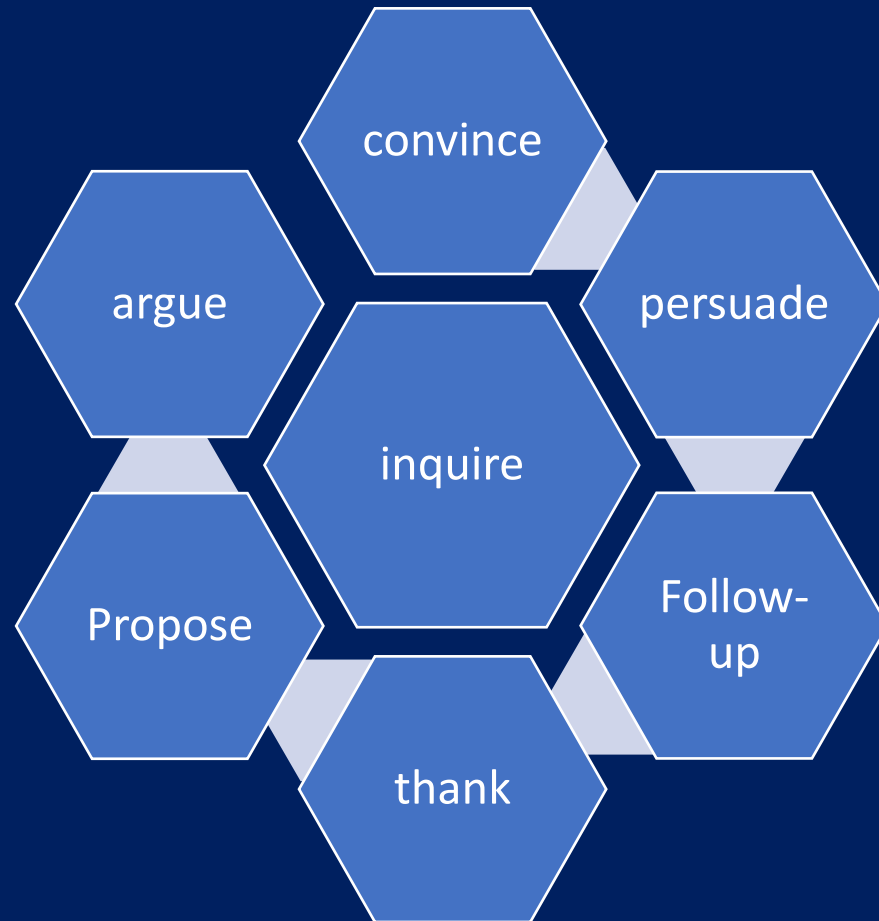
Group 5

Client/colleague



8 mins

The Purpose... why am I writing?



What information needs to be communicated?

What questions need to be answered?

What vocabulary and words can I use?

Clarity...get to the point and state your purpose

Supporting
detail

Who?

What?

When?

Where?

Why?

How?

Clarity...get

Call to action

Who is expected
to do what and
by when?

Let's practice
how to write
clear and concise

In Business Administration writing

- i. Avoid the use of adjectives and adverbs...
- ii. Use active verbs and power verbs....
- iii. Avoid generalities ... like the use of it...
- iv. Avoid jargon and clichés.....
- v. Common grammar mistakes... me/myself...
affect/effect...client's/clients'

Now write a short e-mail to a work colleague or client, keeping in mind all the factors we covered till now.....



5 mins for
written
Task 2
in groups of 2

1.2 The purpose of academic writing in business administration.....

Writers should be clear why they are writing.

The most common reasons for writing include:

- to answer a question the writer has been given or chosen
- to report a piece of research the writer has conducted
- to synthesise research done by others on a topic

Can you think of any other reasons?



Other reasons might include:

- to present a hypothesis for consideration by others
- to make notes on something read

Some common features to keep in mind:

- impersonal and objective
- semi-formal vocabulary, lack of idioms
- use of citation/references
- use of both passive and active voice



1.3 Common types of academic writing done by the business student:

paper

essay

project

dissertation/ thesis

report

notes

A written record of the main points of a text or lecture, for a student's personal use

A study of something that has happened (e.g., a survey a student has conducted).

A piece of research, either individual or group work, with the topic chosen by the student(s).

The most common type of written work, with the title given by the teacher, normally 1,000–5,000 words.

The longest piece of writing normally done by a student (20,000+ words) often for a higher degree, on a topic chosen by the student.

A general term for any academic essay, report or article.

1.3. The format of long and short writing tasks

Short essays
(including exam
answers)

Introduction, main body &
conclusion

Longer essays may
include

Introduction, main body,
literature review, case study,
discussion, references,
conclusion & appendices

Dissertations and
journal articles

Abstract, list of contents, list
of tables, introduction,
main body, literature review,
case study, findings,
discussion, conclusion,
acknowledgements,
references &
appendices

1.4 General features in the format of academic writing

Sentence

Heading

Sub-title

Paragraph

Title

Phrase



1. 5 Other common text features

a) Reference to sources: The first (Bannerjee *et al.*, 2009) looked at slum dwellers . . .

(b) The use of abbreviations to save space: Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)

(c) Italics used to show words from other languages: Bannerjee *et al.* (= and others)

(d) Brackets used to give subsidiary information or to clarify a point: (also known as microfinance)

(e) Numbering systems (1.1, 1.2) are often used in reports, less so in essays

Simple and longer sentences

Simple sentences are easier to write and read, but longer sentences are also needed in academic writing

- Clarity is a priority
- Avoid writing lengthy sentences (if needed use **conjunctions, relative pronouns or punctuation** to link the clauses)
- Let's practise



Dragon Motors – vehicle production 2017–2021

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
135,470	156,935	164,820	159,550	123,075

In 2017, the company produced over 135,000 vehicles.
Between 2017 and 2018, vehicle production increased by 20%.

In 2017, Dragon Motors produced over 135,000 vehicles **but** the following year production increased by 20 per cent. (conjunction)

In 2019, the company built 164,820 vehicles, **which** was the peak of production. (relative pronoun)

Nearly 160,000 vehicles were produced in 2020; by 2021, this had fallen to 123,000. (punctuation)



1.6 Writing in paragraphs



4 mins for
discussion

Discuss the following questions in groups:

- What is a paragraph?
- Why are texts divided into paragraphs?
- How long are paragraphs?
- Do paragraphs have a standard structure?

‘Should home ownership be encouraged?’.

- The rate of home ownership varies widely across the developed world. Germany, for instance, has one of the lowest rates, at 42%, while in Spain it is twice as high, 85%. Both the USA and Britain have similar rates of about 69%. The reasons for this variation appear to be more cultural and historic than economic, since high rates are found in both rich and poorer countries. There appears to be no conclusive link between national prosperity and the number of home owners.



Analyzing a paragraphs

- The rate of home ownership varies widely across the developed world.
 - Germany, **for instance**, has one of the lowest rates, at 42%, while in Spain it is twice as high, 85%.
 - Both the USA and Britain have similar rates of about 69%.
 - **The reasons** for this variation appear to be more cultural and historic than economic, since high rates are found in both rich and poorer countries.
 - **There appears to be** no conclusive link between national prosperity and the number of home owners.
- Introductory sentence
 - Example 1
 - Example 2
 - Reason
 - Summary



Main Components of a paragraph

- (a) A paragraph is a group of sentences that deal **with a single topic**
- (b) The length of paragraphs varies significantly according to text type, but should generally be **no less than four or five sentences**
- (c) Normally, **the first sentence introduces the topic**. Other sentences may give definitions, examples, information, reasons, restatements and summaries
- (d) The parts of the paragraph are **linked together by the phrases and conjunction**. They guide the reader through the argument presented



Introducing paragraphs and linking them together

In order to begin a new topic, you may use phrases such as:

- *Turning to the issue of . . .*
- *Inflation must also be examined . . .*
- *. . . is another area for consideration*

Paragraphs can also be introduced with adverbs:

- *Traditionally, few examples were . . .*
- *Finally, the performance of . . .*
- *Currently, there is little evidence of . . .*

In the essay on home ownership above, each new paragraph begins with a phrase that links it to the previous paragraph, in order to maintain continuity of argument:

- *Despite this* (i.e. the lack of a conclusive link)
- *All these claims* (i.e. arguments in favour of home ownership)



1.7 Important Academic Vocabulary....

- Prefixes and Suffixes

Prefixes and suffixes are the first and last parts of certain words. Understanding the meaning of prefixes and suffixes can help you work out the meaning of a word and is particularly useful when you meet specialist new vocabulary.

'Unsustainable' is an example of a word containing a prefix and suffix. Words such as this are much easier to understand if you know how prefixes and suffixes affect word meaning.

Suffixes show the meaning or the word class (e.g. noun, verb).



Prefixes.....

Prefixes change or give the meaning:

(a) Negative prefixes: NON-, UN-, IN-, IM-, MIS-, DE- and DIS- often give nouns, adjectives and verbs a negative meaning: nonsense, unclear, incapable, impossible, mishear, decrease, disagree.

(b) A wide variety of prefixes define meaning (e.g. PRE- usually means 'before'), hence prefer, prehistory and, of course, prefix!



Suffixes.....

Suffixes show the meaning or the word class (e.g., noun, verb).

- (a) Some suffixes such as -ION, -IVE or -LY help the reader find the word class (e.g., noun, verb or adjective) station...lonely...privitise

- (b) Other suffixes add to meaning (e.g. -FUL or -LESS after an adjective have a positive or negative effect – thoughtful/careless)

Let's practice.....



1.8 What is relevant and reliable for my research task?

- examine the most suitable text types for academic work
- explore ways of locating relevant materials in the library
- explain different reading methods
- introduce a critical approach to potential sources.



RESEARCH

Common written resources used by business students.....

TEXT TYPE	ADVANTAGE	DISADVANTAGE
Textbook	Written for students	May be too general or outdated
Website	Usually up to date	Possibly unreliable and unedited
Journal article	Often focused on a special area	May be too specialised or complex
Official report(e.g., from government)	Contains a lot of detail	May not be objective
Newspaper or magazine article	Easy to read and up to date	May not be objective and may not give the sources
E-book	Easily accessible	Needs to be read on the screen

Finding
online
sources

....

Finding online sources

How to find background papers for your research paper

How to choose suitable texts.....

Read title and sub-title
carefully

Survey text features (e.g.,
abstract, contents, index)

Skim text for gist-is it
relevant?

Scan the text for information you need e.g., terms, phrases..

Read extensively when
useful sections are found

Read intensively to make notes on key points.....



Thank you for today!

Next lesson we will be focusing more in detail on further skills in conducting and presenting research findings!



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