

Pre session polls

What level of study are you?

- Access
- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3
- Postgraduate

What would you consider is your main area of study?

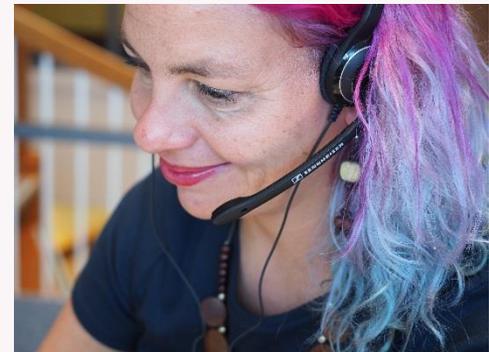
- Arts
- Languages (English & other)
- Social sciences
- Business and law
- Science
- Engineering or technology
- Maths
- Health sciences
- Education
- Sports
- OTHER

Have you been to any student hub live online events before?

- Yes last year (any 2018)
- Yes this year (any 2019)
- Yes other
- No (but have listened to one or more recording)
- No (didn't have time)
- No (wasn't aware of before now)

What are student hub live online sessions?

- All student hub live sessions are non modular and focus on skills relevant to study at university level
- Polls are anonymous to other participants but the chat box will have your logged in name associated with your comments
- All online sessions are recorded and available to view on catch up on a public facing website. *Small group discussions are not recorded.*
- Slides are available at the end of the session and from the main website



Become a SHL ambassador:

SHL ambassadors are advocates of SHL, sharing their experiences and telling others about events and opportunities to get involved. The role of ambassador is tailor-made for each person. You can do something small like send in a quote that we could use about how you have experienced events, a picture of you or your space (and study buddies/cake supply) attending a SHL event. You could tell other students about it on social media, and even come up to Milton Keynes and be involved in livestream events either on or off camera. This could involve sharing your advice for other students, doing the quiz, or taking part in a particular session. We are able to pay travel expenses if you travel to Milton Keynes. In return we would look to offer you something of use which may be attending an event on campus or facilitating connections, for example.

To register your interest, email studenthub@open.ac.uk and let us know how you would like to get involved

Initial polls

What is your main reason for coming along this evening?

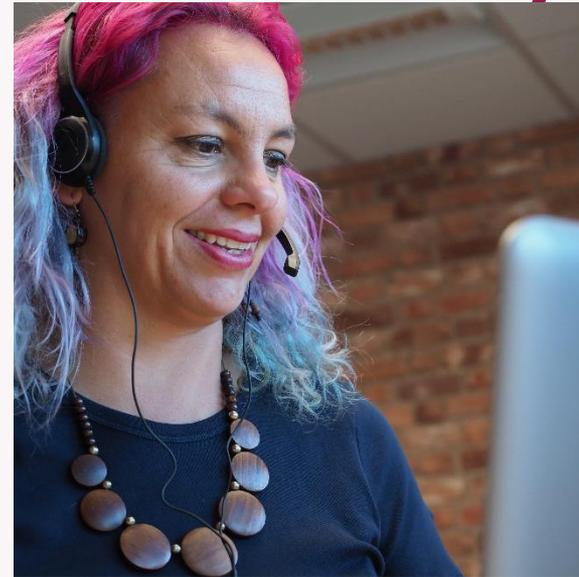
Are you currently...? (please choose the one that is closest)

- part way through a module that began earlier this year (2019) (e.g. February, May)
- on a summer break with next module due to start in October 2019

student hub live is the OU's live online interactive platform to support academic community



Karen Foley is a lecturer at the OU, head of student hub live and chairs Y032. She also tutors in social sciences, psychology and science.



Isabella Henman is an essay writing aficionado and skills trainer. She tutors in science and health sciences at Access to level 2.

Developing your academic writing

This was our advert...

One of the most important skills in Higher Education is using an academic voice. In this session we will discuss how to effectively employ tone, tense, voice and structure to enhance your writing style. This workshop covers being objective and presenting your arguments with evidence, it complements the essay writing workshops that will be run in the autumn.

Workshop

- This is going to be a structured workshop covering what is meant by academic writing as well as some of the key features
- We'll give some tutor advice and suggestions on areas that are commonly tricky
- You'll also get the chance to discuss things with others in a small group

Session purpose

- **Is for:**
- Covering the basics of academic writing
- Give some guidance about the different features of academic writing and what these mean
- Provide a space to share ideas and connect with other students
- **Is not for:**
- Telling you what you HAVE to do
- Providing any module specific advice

What is academic writing?

- Please give your ideas about what is meant by the term academic writing in the short answer poll available
- Next suggest what makes academic writing different from other types of writing like writing to a friend using the other short answer poll available

Academic writing is...

- factual and to the point
- objective (not opinionated or subjective)
- not flowery (unless creative writing!)
- acknowledging sources
- appropriately planned and structured
- specific to the question you are answering
- convincing the reader that you know and understand that question and are answering it accurately

Academic English

- This is more formal than everyday English.
- Look for specific module guidance as some modules have prepared primers & pre-module guides or part of their module or faculty guide which covers expectations for academic English.
- Studenthome study skills section
<https://help.open.ac.uk/developing-academic-english>

Narrative voice

- A narrative voice is the theme and presentation of the writing and is the way that the language is used
- You can also compare text to how I speak.
- In SHL we are discussing skills and showcasing how to use them, but in a narrative fashion – writing a narrative is not the same as a narrative voice

Narrative voice

- The theme and narrative voice of this session is academic writing
- We are using various examples, activities and contexts to explain that
- Those examples, activities and contexts are not the actual narrative though

Language and structure

- 'Big word bingo' is not appropriate
- Sentences have ~10-15 words
- Paragraphs have 100-300 words but should always be focused on a single topic each

These are not hard and fast rules but broad guidelines as a starting point

What to include?

- Read your TMA instructions and use the sources that you are asked to use (not others that you might like and not material from other modules)
- Clearly relate the answer to the question (but not the question says this so I am answering that)
- Take cues on style from what you are asked to do – e.g. short answer q (<50 words) or longer prose (500+)

Tutor tips!

- Make sure you say what you meant to say, not what was ‘in your head’
- We hear “but that’s what I meant” a lot 😊
- You cannot assume your reader will automatically know what you mean if you are not clear, or have difficulties with spellings / grammar
- Don’t just word drop because you have seen the word in the module, make it clear that YOU know what it means
- Tutors invariably don’t need to know what *I*, *we*, *you* think / did – you need impersonal language

Academic third person

- Try rewriting the advert excerpt below in academic third person. Please use the short answer poll provided

In this interactive SHL session we will look at some of the key features of academic writing and explain how to develop your academic writing skills.

Tone

- Academic writing has a specific type of tone but it is not...
- ...Language that forward and backward is



Tone

- ...Moribund linguistics from whence one perceives intentional concepts



Tone

- ...Full of if's but's don't can't lol watevs



Tone

- ...Opinionated and value laden



Objectivity

- Opinion invariably has no place in academic writing, writing can be 99% objective then one word can undermine that
- Foley presented the theory that attending studenthublive sessions provided extremely useful support for student skills
- Please use the poll option to indicate which is the value laden word

Objectivity

- Adverbs are often value laden – very, too, completely as they take something from being a statement (even if it predicts an outcome or gives a result) to an opinionated statement

Tone

- Academic writing has a specific type of tone and you need to think carefully about who it is that you are aiming at or writing to and for
- Your tone will be different from the one you use for nearly everything else

Tense

- In general this is a presented 'as is'
- If anything it is past tense e.g. *Foley presented the theory that attending studenthublive sessions provided valuable support for student skills*
- Not *Foley was presenting her theory that attending studenthublive sessions will be providing valuable support for student skills*

Structure

- PEE



- Point
- Evidence
- Explain

Structure

- PESELS
 - Point
 - Explain
 - Support
 - Evaluate
 - Link
 - Signpost

Referencing poll

- Suggest what the purpose of referencing is

What is referencing?

- Referencing has 2 parts – an in text citation and the full reference details.
- The in text citation indicates that a piece of information, idea or fact has been drawn from a specific named source.
- The reference details give the full details of what that source is and where it can be found.
- *The actual format of this does differ according to module and subject which reflects the requirements of the overall academic world.*

Referencing is not

- ...a way of getting out of writing in your own words. An essay that is a string of quotations, even with a matching string of citations, is not your own work so would not be appropriate at university level.

Useful resources

- The library runs excellent sessions on referencing
- <http://www.open.ac.uk/library/training-and-events/the-why-and-how-of-referencing>
- Live sessions are advertised on <http://www.open.ac.uk/library/>

Information polls

What level of study are you?

- Access
- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3
- Postgraduate

Are you currently...? (please choose the one that is closest)

- part way through a module that began earlier this year (2019) (e.g. February, May)
- on a summer break with next module due to start in October 2019

Have you been to any student hub live online events before?

- Yes last year (any 2018)
- Yes this year (any 2019)
- Yes other
- No (but have listened to one or more recordings)
- No (didn't have time)
- No (wasn't aware of before now)

Discussion activity

- Discuss as a group your best tips for writing effectively academically. If you are new then you may like to think of questions or say which of the aspects presented tonight have been most useful in helping you think about what is important
- Please bring back a few points that you can share with the rest of the group.

Useful points for breakouts

- We suggest you use the first couple of minutes to introduce yourselves and get used to the room. Choose a volunteer to keep the discussion on track and feed back to the main room
- Remember to activate your microphone to speak as per the instructions given.
- Breakout groups work best if people engage and contribute and discuss
- There will be 13 minutes for the breakouts overall – we'll send regular reminders to let you know how long you have got left

*Remember to check the number of the room you are in (shows at top of chat pod as “chat x **BREAKOUT y**”) in case of connection issues and for bringing back information.*



Breakout activity

- Discuss as a group your best tips for writing effectively academically. If you are new then you may like to think of questions or say which of the aspects presented tonight have been most useful in helping you think about what is important
- Please bring back a few points that you can share with the rest of the group.

This session is currently in breakouts (small groups).

If you are part of this group and have had connection issues please let us know your room number in the chat box

If you are only just arriving in this room then unfortunately you have missed the main session. Please log back out and watch the recording which will be available later this evening

So....

- What can people share from their sessions?

Take home message

- Academic writing has a specific focus and style and takes some work to get used to but is straightforward in purpose
- It conveys information in an objective balanced way without personal viewpoints or inflection and sticks to the point

Autumn sessions

- There will be sessions on essay planning and writing, critical thinking and writing, learning from feedback and assessment as well as other communication skills
- Keep an eye on <http://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/> for dates and times

Final polls

What do you feel is the main thing you will take away from this evening?

What are you going to do as a result of this evening's session?

Which of the following elements of tonight's session did you find useful?

- Tutor led explanation
- Opportunity to chat in text chat box
- Opportunity to suggest ideas in polls
- Breakout room (discussion with / learning from other students)
- Breakout activity (reflecting on the concepts in more detail)
- Any other aspect (please give details in chat)

Online Room summer skills series (Thursdays at 20.00):

25/7 – Storytelling or argument; creating an argument in your writing

1/8 – Preparing for the end before you begin

Tonight's slides are available to download from the link provided. Click on the words essay planning then download file and it will download to wherever downloads go on your own computer.

Past student hub live online sessions [here](#)

Visit us at

<http://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/>

Send us feedback at

studenthub@open.ac.uk

View past (live) recordings on

www.youtube.com/thestudenthublive

