

# 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?

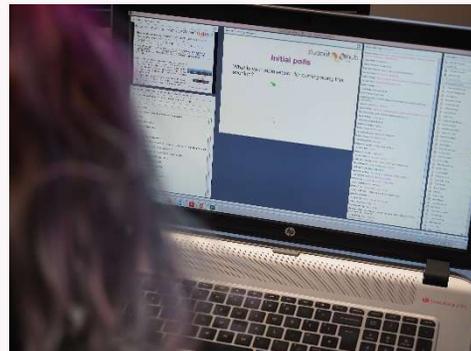
- Arts
- Languages (English & other)
- Social sciences
- Business and law
- Science
- Engineering or technology
- Maths
- Health sciences
- Education
- Sports
- OTHER

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

- No (I'm brand new to SHL!)
- No (but have listened to one or more recordings)
- No (didn't have time)
- No (wasn't aware of before now)
- Yes any 2021 or before

## 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 during the live session.
- All online sessions are recorded and available to view on catch up on a public facing website.
- Slides are available to download during the session (*not accessible on mobile devices*) and from <http://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/>.



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



Isabella Henman is an essay writing aficionado and skills trainer and has been the main student hub live online speaker since 2017. She tutors in science and health sciences at Access to level 2.



Rob Moore works on a range of under-graduate and post-graduate modules for the Open University Business School. Rob's passion is in making live online sessions fun and effective.

# Workshop

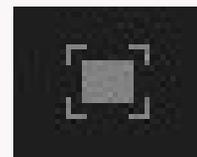
- This is going to be a structured workshop covering what is meant by academic writing as well as some of the key features
- We'll give some tutor advice and suggestions on areas that are commonly tricky
- You'll also get the chance to discuss things with others in a small group

## Session purpose

- **Is for:**
- Covering the basics of academic writing (not specifically essay 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

## Please be aware

- These sessions are large scale
- They are very busy
- There is lots of interaction
- They are not the same as other tutorials
- You can maximise slides on your own screen by clicking the icon



## Please

- Do NOT share any personal information in the chat pod during the session
- On the recording names will be anonymised to user number
- However if you type anyone's full name or any other personal information in the chat pod it can be seen by everybody and it would also show up on the recording

# Initial poll

What is your main reason for coming along to this session? Please choose the option that fits for you today:

- Study skills for current module(s)
- Study skills for future module (s)
- Connecting with other students
- Gain new ideas
- Responding to recommendation from tutor
- Curious about what studenthublive is

# Developing your academic writing

## This was our advert...

A good academic writing style can demonstrate successful learning in higher education but isn't always thought of as a skill in its own right. We'll outline the characteristics of good academic writing and explain how to develop your own approach. Get a tutor's take, as well as a student's viewpoint.

# What do you want to learn?

Using the short answer poll provided please say what you are hoping to learn from today's session

*(If you are on a mobile device remember you need to tap into the polling option)*



*To come back to these slides after completing a poll click on the share pod slides icon*



## 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
- *Remember to look at other answers to see what others suggest and see if you agree / disagree / hadn't thought of (you may need to scroll to see all answers)*

## 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

- Academic writing has a specific type of tone but it is not...
- ...Moribund linguistics from whence one perceives intentional concepts



# Tone

- Academic writing has a specific type of tone but it is not...
- ...Full of if's but's don't can't lol watevs



# Tone

- Academic writing has a specific type of tone but it is not...
- ...Opinionated and value laden



# Objectivity

- Opinion invariably has no place in academic writing, writing can be 99% objective then one word can undermine that – is value laden
- What we mean here is that something gives an opinion or similar or over-emphasises something

# Objectivity

- Look at the following piece of text and then use the poll option to indicate which is the value laden word
- Foley presented the theory that attending studenthublive sessions provided extremely useful support for student skills

# 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. *Henman presented the theory that attending studenthublive sessions provided valuable support for student skills*
- Not *Henman was presenting her theory that attending studenthublive sessions will be providing valuable support for student skills*

# Structure

- PEE



- Point – make it
- Evidence – support it with facts
- Explain – why the evidence is supportive and it is relevant

# Structure

- PESELS
  - Point - make the point for this paragraph
  - Explain - what do you mean by this point
  - Support - provide evidence from studies and research
  - Evaluate - what is there about this point that is for/against
  - Link - to the essay task
  - Signpost - to the next paragraph

# 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/>

## Remember

- Referencing is important but is not the be all and end all of any academic piece
- Use a commensurate amount of time and effort for referencing as it is worth
- That doesn't mean ignore it, but equally it shouldn't be taking hours

## Discussion activity

- There will be 2 specific questions in chat pods for you to explore some of the elements we have discussed further.
- *I have developed my academic writing by...*
- *I intend to work on my academic writing by...*
- You are welcome to add your thoughts and we will then pick up some of the themes and talk through them.
- Chat does have names on but the recording will be anonymised so you will appear as 'user number'

## 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

## Final polls

What do you feel are the main things you will take away from this session?

- Better understanding of today's topic
- Better understanding of the place of study skills within university study
- Enthusiasm for my studies
- Enthusiasm for my skills development
- Feel part of the university
- Feel part of SHL

If you have any other feedback please send to [studenthub@open.ac.uk](mailto:studenthub@open.ac.uk)

# Upcoming 2021 sessions



28th Sep 7pm Academic writing  
5<sup>th</sup> Oct 7pm essay planning (beginners)  
12<sup>th</sup> Oct 11am essay planning (advanced)

Week of 27<sup>th</sup> (re)freshers broadcast events  
(30<sup>th</sup> Sep 11am academic writing skills)



Details and booking information from



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

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

Visit us at <http://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/> and subscribe for events as they are announced. Send us feedback at [studenthub@open.ac.uk](mailto:studenthub@open.ac.uk)



Study skills workshop



Live broadcast