

ACADEMIC WRITING STYLE

University writing is essentially argumentative. It is factual and supported by evidence. The style is formal, objective and impersonal. It includes features of written NOT spoken discourse. The language is concise without unnecessary words or repetition.

It avoids

- first and second personal pronouns (*I, me, we, our, us, you, your*) even when expressing personal opinions. In response or reflective writing for example, it is still possible to indicate personal stance or viewpoint without using '*Personally, I think, My own opinion is, I feel that, I believe, In my view.*
- contractions (write '*it is*' NOT '*it's*'; '*they are*' NOT '*they're*')
- abbreviations (e.g., i.e., etc. NZ)
- colloquialisms (*awesome, massive, lots, hugely, huge, heaps, terrible, sort of, like, in this day and age, cool, just a click away, way better, stuff, got*)
- wordiness and jargon: This is the use of unnecessary words or repetition:

Instead of	<i>due to the fact that</i>	write:	<i>because</i>
	<i>at this point in time</i>		<i>now</i>
	<i>for the reason that</i>		<i>because</i>
	<i>with respect to</i>		<i>about</i>
	<i>In the event that</i>		<i>if</i>
	<i>oftentimes</i>		<i>often</i>
	<i>at 1 a.m in the morning</i>		<i>at 1 a.m.</i>
	<i>true facts</i>		<i>facts</i>
	<i>large in size</i>		<i>large</i>
	<i>red in colour</i>		<i>red</i>

It uses

- passive forms, where possible, and if the subject (doer of the action) is unknown or unimportant. For example, write '*It is recommended that..*' NOT '*We will recommend that*'
- tentative or provisional language (hedging), especially if the results are inconclusive:

e.g. *The weather probably affected/ may have affected the final readings.
It is possible that the weather affected the final readings*

BUT beware of over-hedging causing wordiness:

It seems it might be possibly very wise to follow the outlined procedures

- **Following the outlined procedures might be wise.**

*The results **appear to indicate that** the mixture **may have been more or less saturated with oil.***

- **The results indicate that the mixture was somewhat saturated with oil.**

