

CHECKLIST FOR ACADEMIC WRITING

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Begin with the content

- 1 Read the topic sentences only in the text – do you get a coherent “story”?
- 2 Does the text give a clear and logical message, developed with well-based arguments?
- 3 Does the text do what the title and the introduction promise? Is there a clear conclusion?
- 4 How well has the writer followed the task instructions?
- 5 Is the text easy to read, or do you stop, hesitate, and have to reread or wonder (leaps of thought)?

	Good scientific style	Common problems
Overall organization, sections, paragraphs, sentences	The content is systematically collected following the principle of going from general to particular. Paragraphs begin with a topic sentence that presents the paragraph topic	The content is not presented systematically Paragraphs are not clearly structured. The connection between paragraphs is unclear. Topic sentences are missing
Coherence	Information structure : sentences follow the theme –rheme (given-new) sequence There are linkers which connect the sentences Some linking words and phrases signal the text organization or make the content more accessible: <i>Similar conclusions can be drawn from ...</i> and explain how ideas relate to open another: <i>Unlike X, Y has ...</i>	Illogical information structure confuses the reader More linkers are needed The text is hard to read because facts are piled on one another and there are not enough linguistic signals of the function, purpose, and relationships of the information
Referencing	Summaries of sources: (a) are relevant to the aim and the question asked, i.e. they take the discussion forward and support its argumentation (b) have been formulated in the writers' own words (c) are marked linguistically as citations, where appropriate (<i>according to... suggested that...</i>) (d) are integrated into their context (e) have complete and correct references to sources following the system required	summaries (a) Have unclear purposes (b) Are too close to the sources (c) Lack appropriate marking (d) Consist of facts piled up without clear inter relations (e) Have missing or incomplete references
Concentration	The text is in formal written English with dense construction	The language is colloquial and loose
Precision	The exact word for the relation or concept intended is used, the reader does not have to rely on the context. (<i>process, parameter, phenomenon</i>)	Words do not mean exactly what is intended
Correctness	Sentences are complete, grammar is correct, punctuation follows rules	Parts of sentences are missing, there are grammar errors, there are mis-spellings

Coherence creating transition signals

Meaning/Function	Adverbs/ Phrases	Conjunctions/ subordinators	Others
1. To introduce an additional idea	in addition furthermore moreover	and	another X an additional X
2. To introduce an opposite idea or contrast	on the other hand in contrast however nevertheless nonetheless	but, although even though whereas while [though]	in spite of X despite X
3. To introduce a choice or alternative	otherwise	or If, unless	
4. To introduce a restatement or explanation	in fact indeed that is, i.e.		
5. To list in order	first, second, third next, last, finally		the first, second, the next, last, final
6. To introduce an example	for example for instance, e.g.		an example of X such as X
7. To introduce a conclusion or summary	clearly in conclusion indeed, in short in summary		
8. To introduce a result or cause	as a result/ consequence (of) therefore consequently hence, thus	so because, since, as	result from be the result of due to because of the cause/effect/ consequence of