

## Academic Writing - Hints and Tips

### 1. Abbreviations and Acronyms

Don't use abbreviations like e.g. in academic writing, use the full term: *'for example.....'*

The first time you use a title which has an abbreviated alternative you must write it out in full with the abbreviation in brackets.

*'I work in the Adult Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (ALDD) Section.'* After the first reference you can use the abbreviation.

### 2. Absolutely not!

Be careful about using absolute terms such as: always/never/all/none.

*'There are never any behaviour problems in classes for older learners,'* becomes:

*'Behaviour is rarely identified as a major issue in classes for older learners.'*

### 3. Not too chatty...

Avoid informal language which resembles speech.

*'I really like what Geoff Petty says about active learning,'*

becomes: *'I agree with Petty's argument for the promotion of active learning.'*

### 4. Hedging your bets

In academic writing it is better to suggest rather than state something categorically. Use terms such as: seems that, appears that, suggests that, demonstrates that, might.

*'The results of the research suggest that.....'*

### 4. Explain your jargon

Most subject areas have technical terminology. Make sure you explain key terms to your reader.

*'I use ILPs (individual learning plans) with my learners.'*

### 5. Be careful about using rhetorical questions

Use rhetorical questions sparingly in academic writing.

*'How do we engage disaffected learners?'* becomes:

*'It is important to understand how to engage with disaffected learners.'*

### **5. Don't be too certain...**

Academic writing is objective. Avoid imposing your own direct opinions on the reader.

'E2E students are very difficult to teach,' becomes:  
'*Behaviour management has been identified as a key issue on many Entry to Employment courses.*'

### **6. Keep it impersonal**

Although you will need to refer to your own experiences, try to avoid using personal pronouns too frequently: I/me you/we/us

'I think the government should do something about funding,' becomes: '*It could be argued that the government should increase funding in this area.*'

### **7. Don't use Don't!**

Avoid contractions such as: don't, can't, shouldn't and it's.