

CLEAR WRITING AND EDITING

Want good marks at UWA? Make sure that your writing is *clear*.

What is clear writing?

In clear writing the core messages are easy to find. The easiest place to find these is in a purpose statement at the beginning of a piece of writing, with topic sentences at the start of each section. Summaries in your conclusion and at the end of sections will ensure that your core messages can't be missed.

Along with topic and purpose statements, the '*so what*' factor is essential in both your introduction and the conclusion. The '*so what*' factor covers:

- Why the reader should care about what you've written; and
- What makes your message, topic or approach important, significant, interesting, special or new.

C.L.E.A.R. is an acronym to help you remember the important features of academic writing:

C	Cohesion
L	Logic
E	Expression
A	Analysis
R	Relevance

Let's take a look at each of these features:

Cohesion

Cohesive writing is predictable and easy to follow. Your thesis statement, topic sentences and summary statement should be thematically consistent.

TIP

Cohesive writing makes good use of connectors, repetition and reference words. Using these appropriately makes your writing easy to follow. Check out our [Linking Words and Phrases Survival Guide](#) for further information.

Logic

Logical writing uses the powerful tools of logic and reason to systematically develop and support ideas with:

- Evidence;
- Explanation; and
- Examples.

TIP

When you are using evidence from other sources, check to ensure that all quotes, summaries, paraphrases, citations and references are accurate.

Expression

All academic writing should feature correct grammar, punctuation and spelling. To write really well, close attention should also be paid to the choice of each word, phrase and clause. This will ensure not only a clear flow of ideas, but an elegance of expression.

Analysis

In analytical writing, you can explore the relationships between ideas in the following ways:

- Synthesise – select and combine ideas in new ways;
- Compare – state similarities and differences between ideas;
- Discuss – look at ideas from different perspectives and debate their value;
- Critically evaluate – make your own reasoned judgement about these ideas.

Relevance

Ensure that all of the material you include relates to the topic or question under discussion. Make sure your thesis statement, topic sentences and summary statements all:

- Directly address the topic; and
- Answer the question.

If they don't, revise or remove. Don't forget also to check that all the sentences within a paragraph are related to the topic sentence of that paragraph.

CLEAR Writing Checklist:

CRITERION	EXPECTATIONS	MACRO FEATURES		MICRO FEATURES	
CLEAR	Core messages are easy to find	The overall structural pattern of the whole text, each section & each paragraph is topic-development		Summary statements are used appropriately at the end of sections & the end of the text.	
COHESION	The writing is easy to follow & assists the reader to predict what is coming next	The thesis statement, topic sentences & summary statement are thematically related & allow the reader to predict what is coming next		Connectors, repetition & reference words are used appropriately.	
LOGIC	The writing employs logic, reasoning & evidence	The writer explains, gives examples & provides evidence to support ideas		Quotes, summaries, paraphrases, citations & references are appropriate.	
EXPRESSION	The writing is expressive & technically correct	The writer's purpose & the significance or 'so what' factor are clear in the introduction & conclusion		Grammar, punctuation, word choice & spelling are appropriate. Non-discriminatory language is used.	
ANALYSIS	Relationships between ideas are explored	Ideas are synthesised, discussed, compared & critically evaluated		Descriptive, analytical, evaluative & speculative language is used appropriately.	
RELEVANCE	All of the material pertains to the topic or question	Thesis statement, topic sentences & summary statements address the topic & answer the question		Sentences within paragraphs are all related to the topic sentence.	

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Linking Words and Phrases, Reporting What Others Say, Active and Passive Voice, Academic Writing Style: Objectivity, Academic Writing Style: Clarity, Academic Writing Style: Formality, Using Propositions, Using –ing Words and Infinitives.

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