

Academic & Scientific Writing

PCMD

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What feedback have you had
so far on your writing?

What problems do you
have with writing?

Sources of information and help

- ???????

Sources of information & help:

Handbooks

Information on referencing (EMILY)

Your Provider (for content/ general questions)

Past examples of SSUs (on EMILY)

Writing workshops with John Straker

Academic Services Advisors:

Email: studentskillsappointment@exeter.ac.uk

Spell- & grammar-checks on your computer



Aims in academic writing

Use clear & appropriate structure

Demonstrate logic & coherence

Conform to the appropriate style (see Handbook
Appendix HE-A)

Provide supporting evidence

Synthesise arguments/ research/ opinions

Demonstrate critical thinking

Define terms and abbreviations

The Process of Writing

SUBMIT

Review
feedback

1. Clarify
the task

2. Collate
& record
material

3.
Organise
& plan

4. Stop
& reflect

5. Write an
outline plan
& first draft

6. Work on
& edit your
drafts

7. Proofread,
re-draft
final copy

**SSU 7 Point
Plan**



Planning for a report:

- Start writing the results section (what have I found/ done ?)
- Introduction/background (why?)
- Method (how?)
- Summary (at beginning– 5 main points)
- Discussion
- Conclusion

Argument writing

- Introduction: statement of the issue
- Define terms
- Point 1: explain + evidence
- Point 2: explain + evidence, etc
- Conclusion: implications

OR

- Introduction: statement of the issue
- Define terms
- Points for: 1, 2, etc
- Points against: 1, 2, etc.
- Statement of opinion can be given in Introduction or Conclusion

- NB Support your opinion with evidence!

Paragraph structure

Claim / Controlling statement

Implications

State significance and link to next paragraph

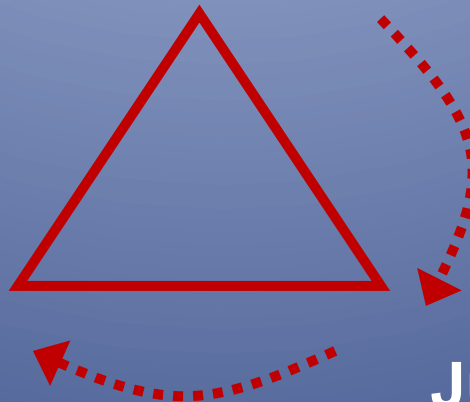
First sentence 'controls' the rest of the paragraph

Support

Theory and references: evidence, case study analysis

Justification

Unpack the controlling statement: explain, analyse



Structure and writing skills

Introductions

- Restate the question or topic of the essay
- Explain the main concepts and what topics you are going to focus on and perhaps include some background information
- Outline how you are going to organise your essay
- If you are arguing a particular viewpoint, outline this briefly

Structure and writing skills

Conclusions

- Provide a brief summary of your main ideas
- Discuss the significance of any of the key points in relation to the question.
- Suggest any implications or the impact of your findings
- Perhaps point to any areas for future research



In-text referencing - HARVARD SYSTEM

Quote:

Good medical practice means that a doctor must “treat patients politely and considerately” (General Medical Council, 2006: 2).

Paraphrase:

Polgar and Thomas (2008) claim that when using an experimental design, care must be taken in the assignment of participants to avoid significant initial differences between intervention groups.

Summary:

Various studies have assessed the efficacy of hand contamination measures (Steere & Mallison, 1975; Larson et al., 1986).



Cite the source

Reference List - HARVARD SYSTEM

(examples of website, journal paper and book)

General Medical Council (2006). *Good Medical Practice*.

http://www.gmc-uk.org/Good_Medical_Practice_0510.pdf_32611016.pdf

(accessed 18 November 2011).

Larson, E., Eke, P.I. & Laughon B.E. (1886). Efficacy of alcohol-based hand rinses under frequent use conditions. *Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy*, 30(4): 542-544.

Polgar, S. and Thomas, S. (2008). *Introduction to Research in the Health Sciences*. 5th ed. London: Churchill Livingstone Elsevier.

In-text referencing - VANCOUVER SYSTEM

Quote:

Good medical practice means that a doctor must “treat patients politely and considerately”.¹

Paraphrase:

Polgar and Thomas² claim that when using an experimental design, care must be taken in the assignment of participants to avoid significant initial differences between intervention groups.

Summary:

Various studies have assessed the efficacy of hand contamination measures.^{3,4}

Cite the source

The diagram consists of a yellow box containing the text 'Cite the source'. Three red arrows originate from this box: one points to the superscript '1' at the end of the quote, another points to the superscript '2' at the start of the paraphrase, and a third points to the superscript '3,4' at the end of the summary. A red line also extends from the bottom of the box down to the summary's citation.

Reference List - VANCOUVER SYSTEM

(examples of website, book and journal paper)

- 1 General Medical Council. Good Medical Practice. 2006.
http://www.gmc-uk.org/Good_Medical_Practice_0510.pdf_32611016.pdf
(accessed 18 November 2011).
- 2 Polgar S, Thomas S. *Introduction to Research in the Health Sciences*. 5th ed. London: Churchill Livingstone Elsevier, 2008.
- 3 Steere AC, Mallison GF. Handwashing practices for the prevention of nosocomial infections. *Ann Intern Med* 1975; 83: 683-90.

Look at the sample SSUs and find examples of good practice as well as areas which need to be improved

Can you identify examples of:

- Knowledge & understanding
- Points backed up by evidence & argument
- Critical appraisal
- Clear structure
- Attention to grammar & spelling
- Accurate referencing

References

- Cottrell, S. (2005). *Critical Thinking Skills*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan
- Neville, C. (2007). *The Complete Guide to Referencing and Avoiding Plagiarism*. Maidenhead: Open University Press
- Resources from Academic Skills Advisers Exeter University
<http://as.exeter.ac.uk/divisions/eqe/skills/>
- Resources from Plymouth University
www.learningdevelopment.plymouth.ac.uk