

# EEI2310

Academic Writing for Teachers of English

## Academic Characteristics

- Formality
- **Objectivity**
- Evidence
- Precision
- Hedging
- Analytical writing



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# Academic Writing Style



Academic style is the **formal, professional language** used for **university-level assessment** and **research**.

(Newcastle University, 2026)

# Objectivity



**closeness**

**neutral**

**own**

Often you'll see that personal pronouns such as 'I', 'you', or 'we', are avoided. This is because use of these pronouns assumes a \_\_\_\_\_ with the audience. Academic writing tends to be objective and \_\_\_\_\_, so this isn't always relevant or necessary. You should also be careful to make sure you don't use language to show you have been influenced by your \_\_\_\_\_ **beliefs, emotions, opinions, or experiences.**

(Newcastle University, 2026)



# Objectivity

- Present facts and information **without any personal biases or opinions.**
- Avoid using language that is **overly emotional** or **persuasive.**



# Maintain a neutral tone.



Research shows  
studies suggest



I believe  
In my opinion

# No personal opinions

As such, I feel there is a need for government intervention.

These findings suggest the need for government intervention.

# Avoid Emotive Language.

1

The idea that intelligent life exists on Venus or Mars is a ridiculous conspiracy.

2

There is no evidence of intelligent life on Venus or Mars.

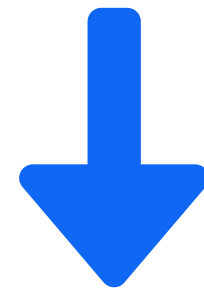
Source: The University of Western Australia

# Avoid Emotive Language.



- To appear objective, **omit emotive adjectives** (e.g. funny, fabulous, awesome, horrible, ridiculous) and **superlative adjectives** (e.g. the best, the worst, the most interesting) from your writing.
- Rather than relying on emotive language, you should provide **specific details** and **evidence** to illustrate a point

Homer Simpson's tenure as Sanitation Commissioner was **disastrous**.



During Homer Simpson's tenure as Sanitation Commissioner, **his policies depleted the town's budget and permanently damaged the local environment.**



Source: The University of Western Australia

# Use Evaluative Language.



Evaluative language expresses a positive or negative judgement about something.

- John Stuart Mill's arguments about free speech **are good**; his views regarding colonisation **are bad**.



- John Stuart Mill's arguments about free speech **are compelling**, yet his views regarding colonisation **are problematic** to many modern readers.



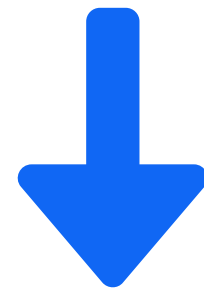
Source: The University of Western Australia

# Use Evaluative Language.

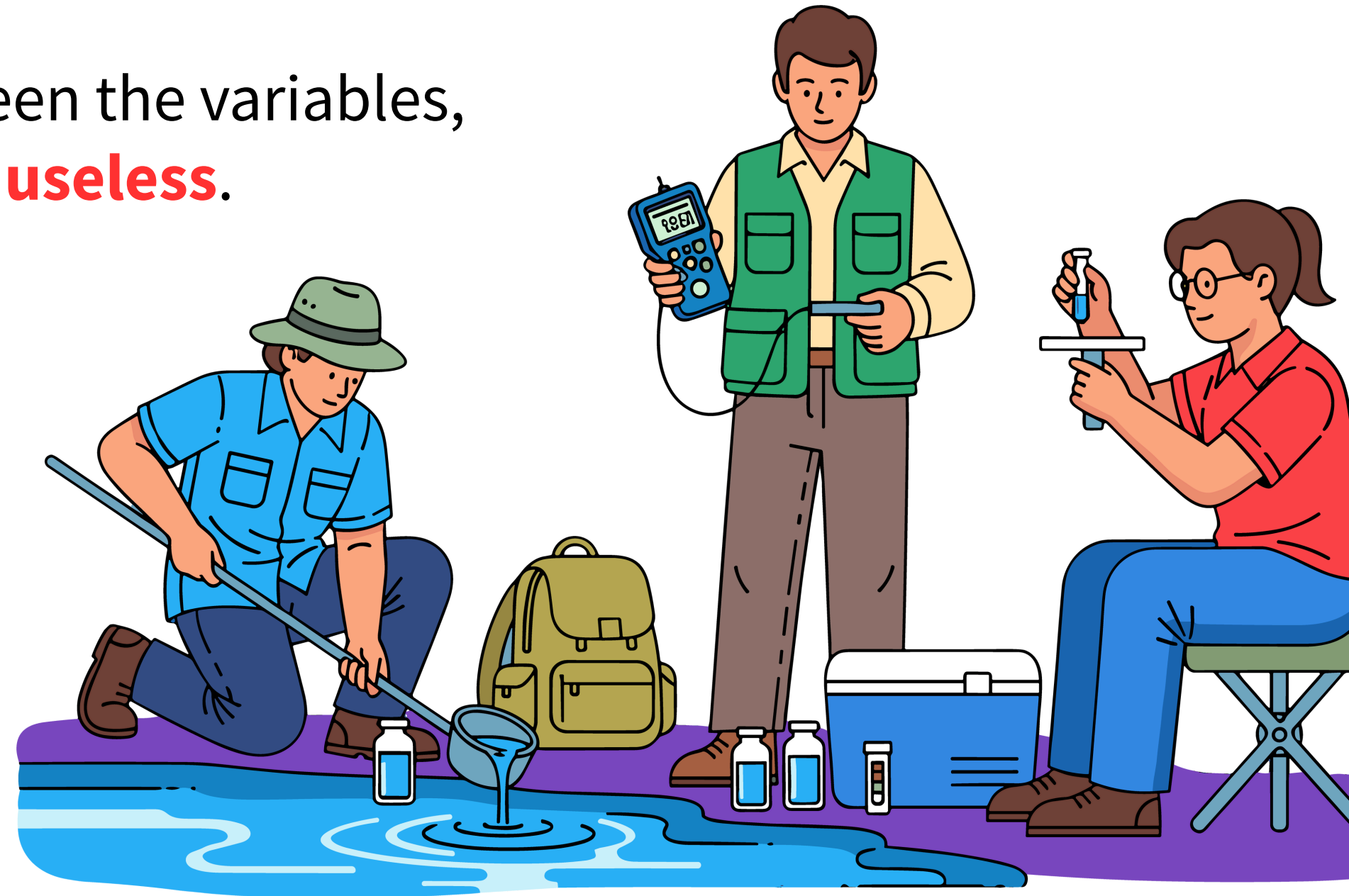


Appropriate evaluative language can make writing more specific and objective

Jones et al. (2018) found **a strong link** between the variables, but the **measly** sample rendered their study **useless**.



Jones et al. (2018) found a **significant relationship** between the variables, but **the small sample (n=12)** limits **the generalisability of their study**.



Source: The University of Western Australia

# Analyse a sample paragraph with an informal tone



Lots of students really struggle with procrastination. ‘It’s not unusual to find reports that puts the prevalence of problematic procrastination in undergraduates as being 70% or above’. There has been a bit of work looking into this, as obviously it’s not good to put things off for a long time. The research isn’t really that conclusive and doesn’t give any clear answers, so I don’t think there is anything that can be done with people who don’t do the work they need to, they should just get on with it in my opinion.

**(Newcastle University, 2026)**



## Feedback on the sample paragraph

‘Lots of students **really struggle with** procrastination.’

- This is too vague - try to avoid expressions like this as we don't know how many people are affected. Research would indicate how many, and a number would strengthen this point and make it more precise.

**=> Procrastination is a significant issue for many students.**

(Newcastle University, 2026)



# Feedback on the sample paragraph

It's not unusual to find reports that puts **the prevalence of problematic procrastination in undergraduates as being 70% or above.**

- Although using evidence helps build an argument, there is **no reference** here and no signposting, so we don't know **where the information is from**, or how it fits in with the rest of the text and how it helps answer the question.

=> Research conducted by **Klassen, Krawchuk and Rajani (2008)** found 'It's not unusual to find reports that puts the prevalence of problematic procrastination in undergraduates as being 70% or above'.

(Newcastle University, 2026)

# Feedback on the sample paragraph



‘There has been **a bit of** work looking into this, as **obviously** it’s not good to **put things off for a long time.**’

- ‘A bit of’ is quite vague. It is also best to avoid words like ‘obviously’. This is subjective and academic writing tends to be objective. The use of phrasal verbs like ‘put off’ and contractions might be considered informal.

=> In order to understand this issue and provide strategies to help overcome procrastination, **several theories** have been developed.

(Newcastle University, 2026)



# Feedback on the sample paragraph

**‘The research isn’t really that conclusive and doesn’t give any clear answers, so I don’t think there is anything that can be done with people who don’t do the work they need to, they should just get on with it in my opinion.’**

- Although a conclusion is drawn, we don’t know how the author has reached this and it seems like a generalised opinion.
- In academic writing, you as the writer can comment, but this needs to be based on the evidence presented.
- The sentence ‘I don’t think there is anything that can be done with people who don’t do the work they need to’ is a very strong statement to make based on limited evidence.

**Overall, the application of this theory seems very limited and may not account for complex factors students may have to face.**

(Newcastle University, 2026)



# Corrected Paragraph

Procrastination is a significant issue for many students. Research conducted by **Klassen, Krawchuk and Rajani (2008)** found **'It's** not unusual to find reports that puts the prevalence of problematic procrastination in undergraduates as being 70% or above'. In order to understand this issue and provide strategies to help overcome procrastination, ***several theories have been developed.*** **The first** is Temporal Motivation theory. **Steel and Konig** developed this theory in 2006 using factors such as motivation, expectation, value, impulsiveness, and delay in a formula. They argue that these factors are common across all students, and that by adjusting one or two, ***significant changes can be made*** and a person's likelihood to procrastinate will reduce. However, **Konig and Steel** took a very theoretical stance, and although considered aspects of psychology, have only conducted minimal empirical research. Overall, the application of this theory seems very limited and may not account for complex factors students may have to face.

**(Newcastle University, 2026)**

# Establish Objectivity

1

using the topic as  
the subject

2

using a passive  
verb

3

using 'it' as an  
empty subject

- **Alterations in Antarctic ice layers** demonstrate that climate change is a real phenomenon.
- The reality of climate change **can be demonstrated** by studying alterations in Antarctic ice layers.
- **It can be demonstrated** that climate change is a real phenomenon by studying alterations in Antarctic ice layers.

Source: The University of Western Australia

# Bibliography



- Newcastle University. (2026). Features of Academic Writing: Understand how to produce effective academic writing. Retrieved January 5, 2026, from Academic Skills Set, Newcastle University: <https://www.ncl.ac.uk/academic-skills-kit/collections/get-ready-to-study/get-ready-to-write/features-of-academic-writing/>
- The STUDYSmarter team for UWA students. (n.d.). STUDYSmarter Survival Guide: ACADEMIC WRITING STYLE: OBJECTIVITY. Retrieved January 13, 2026, from The University of Western Australia: [www.uwa.edu.au](http://www.uwa.edu.au)