

“ARE YOU READY?”

ANSWER SHEET



“Are You Ready?” Questions available at <http://www.utas.edu.au/business/faculty/AcademicSkills/index.html>

[Note: often only one possibility is given, although there are likely to be others.]

1. **Corrected version:**

Adam, S. and Westberg, K. (1998). *Marketing on the internet*. Sydney: Prentice Hall.

Explanation:

Authors' names are listed in alphabetical order by surname (family name) with initials following. The year of publication is marked with punctuation before and after — either brackets or full-stops. The title of the publication is distinguished, usually by italics or bold font. In all references being consistent is important.

2. **Corrected version:**

Jubb, P., Haswell, S. and Langfield-Smith, I. (2005). *Company Accounting*. Melbourne: Thomson.

Explanation:

Be consistent in providing initials for all authors. The place of publication should be the city or town where the item was published. Giving the country is not specific enough. Publishing company details, such as Pty. Ltd. or Co., are not usually given in a list of references.

3. **Corrected version:**

Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) (2007).
<http://www.accc.gov.au>. Accessed 22 January 2008.

Explanation:

A web URL is not enough as a reference. The format for website sources in your list of references is as follows:
Author (the person or organisation responsible for the site). Year (when the site was created or last revised). Name and place of the sponsor of the source. <URL>. Accessed (or 'Retrieved' by you): Day Month Year.
If applicable, remember to include the full version of the name of an organisation, followed by the acronym in brackets.

4. **Corrected version:**

O'Brien (2005) also argued that the law was unfair.

Explanation:

The in-text reference (citation) must go as close to the author's surname (family name) (e.g. O'Brien) as possible. A pronoun, such as 'he' or 'she', does not function as a surname. You need to use the author's surname.

5. **Corrected version:**

(Simon, 1995, cited in Bartol et al., 2001:508)

Explanation:

This is an example of a secondary citation – it means that you saw the Bartol et al. publication but you did not see Simon's. Simon was mentioned by Bartol et al. on page 508.

In a secondary citation, be sure to give the page numbers where possible – definitely for the author whose work you saw, but also for the work you did not see, if the author you saw provides that information.

Note the format of 'et al.', an abbreviation of 'et alia', meaning 'and others'. Since 'et' is not abbreviated, it does not require a full-stop, whereas 'alia' is abbreviated to 'al.'.

Only the author you saw needs to be included in your list of references.

In all citations be sure to be systematic in your use of punctuation. The comma between author's name and year of publication is optional; but if you use it, use it all the time.

6. *Corrected version:*

(Adams, 1974; Brown & Hales, 1975, 1980; Collins, 1976a, b)

Explanation:

Names in a citation are usually ordered alphabetically by surname. No initials or titles are included (except in the case where two authors have the same surname; then they are distinguished from each other by their first-name initials e.g. (Hull, T., 1990; Hull, V., 1992).

Ampersand (&) is often used instead of 'and' in citations to save space and make them easier to read.

Note that commas separate publication in different years by the same author. A semi-colon (;) separates different authors.

7. *Corrected version:*

'In most academic reports you will refer to both primary and secondary research to illustrate your ideas' (Grellier and Goerke 2006:15).

Explanation:

If you are using a direct quotation, the citation occurs outside the quotation marks but before the full stop, as it is not part of the original quotation.

Note that a direct quotation MUST have a page number in the citation to show exactly where the quotation occurs.

Quotation marks should match – either single or double, as long as you are consistent.

If you have quotation marks within quotation marks, use one type (either single or double) for the whole quote and the other type for the inside marks.

8. *Corrected version:*

The main problem with the article is that it does not analyse what other researchers have written about the topic. This essay argues a different point of view.

Explanation:

Because you are the author, we know that this is your opinion; there is no need for phrases such as *in my view*, *in my opinion*, *it is my belief*, or *I think*. Academic writing is generally formal and impersonal i.e. it is the ideas that are important not the individual who writes about them. So in general, academic writing avoids the use of 'I' and 'we' (you and who else?).

Because academic writing is formal, abbreviations and acronyms are spelt out the first time.

Contractions, such as *doesn't*, *haven't*, and *can't*, are given in full as *does not*, *have not*, and *cannot*.

Here, *people* is too general for academic writing, which aims to be as precise as possible and to avoid ambiguity. It is better to use a word such as *researchers* or *scholars* because it is more precise about which people are meant.

Using very broad verbs such as say or do in academic writing also falls into the category of being imprecise. These words cover a multitude of possibilities, all kinds of 'saying' and 'acting'. In academic writing the reader needs some interpretation as to HOW something is said or done; some of the many possibilities for saying include *argue*, *observe*, *comment*, *state*, *note*, *explain*.

Instead of *In this essay we argue...*, which is a personal way of writing, trying to be impersonal (pretending that it is not you who has done the work!), it might be more appropriate to write *This essay argues ...*. This can sound a bit weird and some people do not like this more impersonal style, given that the essay cannot argue without you (i.e. it is still you who are arguing); however, it does satisfy the demand for not putting the individual to the fore in academic writing.

9. **Corrected version:**

Much of the time at the office the HR manager got quite fed up with how difficult it was to get employees working.

Explanation:

Because academic writing is generally formal, academic writers choose formal rather than informal or colloquial alternatives. So *much of the time* is more formal than *a lot of the time*, and *became quite frustrated* is preferred to *got quite fed up*; *to encourage employees to work* would be a more formal alternative than *to get employees working*. In general, phrases with *get* or *got* tend to be informal; so a formal alternative would be more appropriate. While academic writing is quite formal, speaking in academic situations (such as tutorials, seminars, and oral presentations) can often be quite informal.

10. **Corrected version:**

According to DEST, factors such as age, level of schooling, urban or rural residence, and parents' education are important in determining who goes to university.

Explanation:

Like is the informal equivalent of *such as*. Using *such as* will allow you to avoid the vague expression *etc.* Using *etc.* suggests that you think there must be something else but you are not sure what it is. It gives the impression of vagueness or imprecision, even laziness; these are impressions that academic writers try to avoid.

11. **Corrected version:**

This policy may cause an even lower level of productivity and further hinder development and growth of the corporation, for several reasons.

Explanation:

English likes parallel structure: *may cause ... and [may] further hinder*. The phrase *due to several reasons* is redundant; *for several reasons* is more appropriate.

12. **Corrected version:**

It's a difficult course but it's possible to pass because the assessment and its component exercises are spread over a semester.

Explanation:

Note the difference between *its* and *it's*. One way to check whether your use is correct is to expand *it's* into *it is* and see whether it fits your sentence OK. Here *it is* fits fine in both cases.

13. **Corrected version:**

They're often shy about consulting an adviser about their uncertainties, even though the adviser has an office there in the building.

Explanation:

Note the difference between *their* and *they're*. Again, like *its* and *it's*, try expanding *they're* to *they are* to test whether it fits your sentence. Also confusing is *there* and *their*. *There* will always refer to a place (*there* not *here*), whereas *their* tells us that they have or own something (*uncertainties* in this case).

14. **Corrected version:**

The amount of people interested in becoming accountants has increased since 2005 and the university and industry cannot keep up with the demand.

OR

The number of people interested in becoming accountants increased after 2005 and the university and industry could not keep up with the demand.

Explanation:

Amount is used for things that cannot be counted (grammatically). For example you can't say '*one money, two monies, three monies...*' etc. Or *one milk, two milks, three milks*, etc. For things that can be counted, use *number*. So, *the number of people* is appropriate here.

With *since*, the present perfect tense is usually used to denote an action that started to occur in the past but which is still continuing. So *has increased* fits with *since*. Alternately, the sentence could be changed to reflect a statement about what happened in the past, with no implication for the present. It depends which meaning you want to convey.

Cannot is written as one word. Most other verbs with *not* are written as two words e.g. *did not, have not, will not*.

15. **Corrected version:**

People who have a desire to perceive the status quo as a good and unchangeable system which is itself associated with greater opposition to affirmative action, often associated with a person's outlook on society, are reluctant to change their work habits.

[Many alternative endings could be supplied here, as long as they contain a main verb.]

Explanation:

This sentence is incomplete. *People* is the subject of the sentence; it is a complex subject, modified by several additional clauses. However, every sentence in English needs a main verb. So supplying a main verb, for which *people* is the subject, would be a start, e.g. *People who are reluctant to change*. You might also add some additional information in the form of an object: *change their work habits* or *change their usual shopping practices*, for example.

16. **Corrected version:**

Other diseases associated with underdevelopment are the result of inadequate water supplies and sanitary amenities. Unhygienic water disposal is also common.

Explanation:

Inadequate water supplies and *sanitary amenities* are not diseases. Something is missing there. Adding *the result of* or *caused by* fixes this problem.

The original sentence is really made up of two separate sentences which have been run together. Splitting them into two sentences means that each can stand alone.

The subject of the second sentence *unhygienic water disposal* must agree with the verb in that sentence. The true subject (the one word which you cannot eliminate from the sentence) is *disposal*, an uncountable noun; so the verb must be singular. However, looking back to the first sentence, the verb *are* is present tense; so it makes more sense for the second verb *is* also to be in the present tense. Alternately, you could make both verbs past tense.

17. **Corrected version:**

Most students studying at postgraduate level in 2008 were born in the 1970s, there are also increasing numbers of mature age students.

Explanation:

The definite article *the* is required before the time period *1970s*. This is because *the 1970s* is a definite period of time i.e. the ten years between 1970 and 1979. It is incorrect to use an apostrophe 's because the phrase is plural, meaning those ten years, rather than a possessive which would mean

of 1970, not the intended meaning. 1970's can be used in this way: *1970's figures were 10 per cent above 1969's figures.*

18. Corrected version:

Because they were the future generation of managers, this exposure to policymaking by the community was likely to have a crucial influence on health and wellbeing.

Explanation:

This error is called a 'dangling modifier'. The subject of the sentence is *exposure*. The introductory phrase *being the future generation of managers* relates to this subject; however, *exposure* logically cannot be the future generation of managers! Here is an example of correct usage:

Being a future manager, he was crucially influenced by exposure to policymaking by the community in the areas of health and wellbeing.

General questions

19. When do you use double “...” or single ‘...’ quotation marks?

The main thing is to be consistent. You can use either single or double quotation marks as your first choice for quotations and for giving terms e.g. *The term 'enterprise' means an undertaking.*

20. Do you know the difference between the formats of short and long quotations?

Short quotations of 2-3 lines of text can be included in a paragraph of text. Short quotations should be introduced with some kind of interpretation from you (the writer) and be enclosed in either single or double quotation marks, whichever you have chosen as your default. No change at all should be made to the original. If there is a quotation within your quotation, it should be enclosed in the other type of quotation marks. Every direct quotation must be accompanied by a page number together with the author and year of publication in the in-text reference (citation).

Example of a short quotation:

According to Ballard and Clanchy (1981:19), there are at least three starting points in reading for your essay: 'advice from your lecturer or tutor or from other students; your notes from lectures and tutorials; and reading lists provided in the course.'

Long quotations, over about three lines, should be given as a separate paragraph that is indented, single spaced, one or two font sizes smaller than the surrounding text, and NOT enclosed in quotation marks. It, too, should be accompanied by a detailed citation that includes a page number.

Example of a long quotation:

Ballard and Clanchy (1981:19) provide the following suggestions on obtaining advice from academics:

Sometimes you may find that your lecturer or tutor is prepared to discuss the essay topic with you at the very outset. He [sic] may suggest a suitable introductory textbook or journal article which covers the most recent research in the field. More often staff prefer to discuss your topic with you after you have done some initial reading. By that stage you will be more aware of the crucial issues involved and of the difficulties in finding relevant information.

21. Do you know how to arrange names in a List of References according to the Harvard system?

A list of references is ordered *alphabetically* according to the author's surname (family name) or the name of the organisation publishing the item. If more than one book or article is listed for the same writer, they are organised *chronologically*, according to the year that the item was published. If two

items are published in the same year by the same author, refer to them with *a* and *b*, e.g. 2008a and 2008b.

There is no need to number the references in the list.

22. What is the difference between *on the contrary* and *on the other hand*?

Both these phrases indicate contrast. However, *on the contrary* is used after a negative (usually *not*); that is, when something has turned out differently from expectation. The subject in both sentences/clauses will be the same.

Example: He did not fail his examinations; on the contrary, he gained high distinctions in every unit.

On the other hand, *in contrast* and *by contrast* are interchangeable and used to make contrasts. The subject may be different.

Example: She did extremely well in her final semester examinations; by contrast, her friend barely passed all her units.

23. Do you know the difference in usage between hyphens, en dashes and em dashes?

This is one of the finer points of academic writing. It is common for writers to use hyphens for everything, whereas knowing how to use the different types of dash or hyphen shows a sophisticated grasp of writing academic English. The various symbols can be found in Microsoft Word under the 'Insert' menu → 'Symbol' → 'Special Characters'. They differ in length.

A **hyphen (-)** is used to join words to form a description that might otherwise be unclear or misleading: *a three-day weekend*; and to join prefixes to the main word that follows: *ex-convict*, *pre-war*.

An **en dash (–)** is used to join words that are of equal 'weight': *mother–child interaction*, *cost–benefit analysis*.

An **em dash (—)** is used rather like brackets:

The team won—they had not won since 1920—and celebrated all night.

or to add an afterthought or explanation in writing:

Don't let this opportunity pass—buy it now!

24. When do you use figures or words for numbers?

In most academic writing contexts, numbers under 10 are written in words whereas numbers 10 and above are written in numbers, except where a number comes at the start of a sentence. In that case you can either write the number in words (e.g. *Fifteen* rather than *15*) or else rearrange your sentence so that the number does not come at the beginning of the sentence (e.g. *A total of 15 ...*). In a statistical context you should use figures e.g. *44 percent*.

25. Why do we use citations (also called in-text references)?

A citation is used to show the source of your information. Any written academic document that relies on other written sources needs to acknowledge these sources. This is so that others can see where you have obtained your information and can then follow up for themselves if that source looks useful to them. Using citations is a way of demonstrating that you are a careful and systematic scholar; it shows that you have consulted previous writing on your topic and therefore strengthens your argument. The more evidence/citations you can provide, the better.

So, whenever you use another author's words or ideas, you should include a citation with details of author's surname and year of publication, together with a page number (unless you are referring to the whole work).

[This is the first version of this test; comments and suggestions are welcome. Please send comments to Marian.May@utas.edu.au]