



# LEAP Online

Learning Excellence Achievement Pathway Online Tutorial



## Other Writing Skills

LEAP Online

Academic Writing (Level 2)

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## Introduction

Having considered the main components and conventions of academic writing, it is also important to cover other skills needed to produce a well-written piece of work.

Therefore, this section aims to explore:

- Hedging
- Boosters
- Reporting verbs
- Writing numbers

Let's take a look at each skill in turn.

## Skill 1: Hedging



### What is hedging?

'Hedging' or 'introductory verbs' refer to the process of being cautious; a language technique used to express caution, opposed to certainty, on a topic area. As an academic writer, there may be occasions when you find a useful piece of research but you're unsure about the claim being made by the author, or there is a lack of evidence to support your idea. Therefore, instead of excluding the point, you can use hedging language to express your idea.

Let's take a look.

### Use of hedging

Verbs, such as appear(s) and seem(s), which can be used with existential clauses (for example, 'to be') and subordinating conjunctions (for example, 'as though' and 'as if') will help you to demonstrate caution in your writing. For example:

Verb (V) + existential clause (EC) + statement (S)

There (V) appears (EC) to be (S) an association between students accessing LEAP Online and LEAP Live workshops.

There (V) seems (EC) to be (S) an association between students accessing LEAP Online and LEAP Live workshops.

Verb (V) + subordinating conjunction (SC) + statement (S)

It (V) appears (SC) as though (S) LEAP Online is associated with LEAP Live.

It (V) seems (EC) as if (S) LEAP Online is associated with LEAP Live.

### Use of 'That'

As an academic writer, you can also use the word 'that' with the verbs 'appear' and 'seem.' For example:

Verb (V) + 'That' + statement (S)

It (V) appears that (S) LEAP Online is associated with LEAP Live.

It (V) seems that LEAP Online is associated with LEAP Live.

Other 'that' language techniques you can use to express caution include:

- It could be/ has been argued **that**...
- It is clear **that**...
- It is apparent **that**...
- It is understood **that**...
- It appears /seems evident **that**...
- It can be presumed **that**...

Additional techniques to use 'That clauses' in your academic writing include:

The use of 'that' as a pronoun

Research has shown **that** X. As persuasive as that is, later research suggests Y.

The use of 'that' as a demonstrative adjective

A demonstrative adjective is used to describe a position of something or someone.

For example:

Research at the University of Bolton established a new process for X. **That** process was implemented on Y.

The use of 'that' as a conjunction in noun clauses

Conjunctions help to link words, phrases or clauses together. For example:

- Howard (2022) reported **that** further research was necessary
- Barden (2022) inferred **that** there would be a significant increase in results
- Prescott (2022) maintained **that** the results of the research highlighted a significant increase....

## Alternative phrases to express caution in your academic writing

There are additional methods you can use to express caution in your academic writing. If you wish to express frequency, quantity, degree or time, you may find the following phrases useful:

### 1. Generally

Generally, can have different meanings, including:

#### **Definition**

Usually or in most situations.

#### **Example**

The student generally gets to class on time.

#### **Definition**

Considering the whole of someone/something, and not just a particular part.

#### **Example**

The previous point will now be developed more generally.

#### **Definition**

By most people, or to most people.

#### **Example**

It was/ is generally believed that...



## 2. Frequently

### **Definition**

Number of times something happens within a particular period / the fact something is happening often or many times.

### **Example**

Quantitative research is frequently used as a way of creating an informed theory on a given topic.

## 3. Approximately

### **Definition**

Close to a particular number, time, although not the same.

### **Example**

It takes approximately one month to collect the data.

## 4. Reasonable/Reasonably

### **Definition**

To show good judgement.

### **Example**

The lecturers writing is reasonable.

### **Definition**

To show the cost is not too expensive.

### **Example**

The bistro is reasonably priced.

## 5. Somewhat

### **Definition**

To some degree.

### **Example**

The division still exists but is somewhat reduced.

## 6. Common

### **Definition**

The same in a lot of places or for a lot of people.

### **Example**

It is common to see students in Chancellor's Mall.

### **Definition**

A well-known fact.

### **Example**

It is common knowledge Great Britain has a Royal Family.

## 7. Roughly

### **Definition**

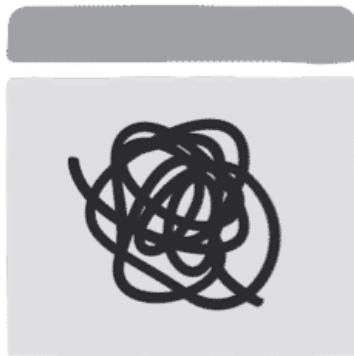
Not exactly.

### **Example**

There has been an increase of roughly 10% over the past two years.

The definitions above are provided by Cambridge Dictionary (2022) and do not represent an exhaustive list.

## Skill 2: Boosters



### Pause and Reflect

If hedges help the writer to express their uncertainty on a topic, how do you think boosters will support the writer?

Our thoughts: To express confidence in their writing.

Examples of boosters, include, but not limited to:

### 1. Certainly

#### Definition

To emphasise something or show that there is no doubt.

#### Examples

Appendix 1 **certainly** demonstrates...

It is most **certainly** widespread with certain groups of individuals.

## 2. Indeed

The term 'indeed' may have several definitions. The common definitions you may use in your work, include:

### Definition

To emphasise something is correct.

### Example

Theorist A did **indeed** allude that....

### Definition

Used to add additional information that develops or supports your argument.

### Example

For certain groups of individuals, rushing their work is not important - **indeed** it can be counterproductive.

### Definition

To emphasis a point said or about to be said.

### Examples

In medical terms, the discovery of a new antibiotic may turn out to be big news **indeed**. If Theorist A did indeed believe....

## 3. Always

### Definition

Every time or all the time.

### Example

Considering the context surrounding his argument, Theorist A **always** presupposes knowledge of...

#### 4. Undoubtedly

##### **Definition**

To emphasise something is true.

##### **Examples**

Theorist A's work is **undoubtedly** at the forefront of work in this field.

**Undoubtedly**, Theorist B disagrees with Theorist A.

#### 5. In fact/ fact that

##### **Definition (fact)**

Something that is known to have happened or exist, especially if there is proof to support this.

##### **Examples**

**In fact**, Theorist A claims....

The patient was **in fact** in bed when the doctor completed their ward rounds.

However, the research undertaken by Theorist A emphasises the **fact that** further research is necessary...

This could be seen as a result of that the **fact that** Theorist B argues against...

#### 6. Clear/ clearly

##### **Definition**

Easy to see, hear, read or understand.

##### **Examples**

When analysing the questionnaires, it became **clear** that... The data can **clearly** be interpreted as...

## 7. Actually

### Definition

In fact or really.

### Examples

Very few studies **actually** address...

**Actually**, research undertaken by Theorist A appears to demonstrate....

This apparent disparity in the data indicates that **actually**...

## 8. Obviously

### Definition

Easy to understand or see.

### Examples

**Obviously**, the findings presented by Theorist A represents...

The treatment that the doctor needs undertake **obviously** depends on the symptoms displayed by the patient.

...but this was **obviously** not the findings Theorist A was trying to present when...

## 9. Prove/ proved/ proven

### Definition

To show a particular result.

### Example

The result **proved** that...

### Definition

Something an individual is good at.

### Examples

The policy of creating equality amongst people **proved** very popular. Theorist A tried to **prove** himself as...

### Definition

To demonstrate, after time or by experience, something/someone has a particular quality.

### Examples

The dispute over the policy could **prove** possible to resolve. The new health and safety protocol has **proven** to be effective.

### Definition

To make it clear something is not true.

### Example

Under the UK legal system, an individual is innocent until **proven** guilty.

## 10. Conclusively

### Definition

Without any doubt

### Examples

Existing literature is unable to prove **conclusively** that...

The evidence appears demonstrate **conclusively** that...

Similarly, Theorist A has **conclusively** demonstrated that...

In relation to the theories presented by Theorist A and Theorist B, it is quite impossible to argue **conclusively** that...

## 11. Definitely

### Definition

Without any doubt

### Examples

The speed test was reduced by 10 and is **definitely** fixed at 60mph.

The data presented by Theorist A **definitely** has some advantages in the analysis of...

The results from the survey imply that there are gaps in research, which **definitely** need further investigation.

## 12. Evidently

### Definition

In a way that is easy to see.

### Example

Overall, the results of the survey **evidently** show...

**Evidently**, the results of the questionnaire found that...

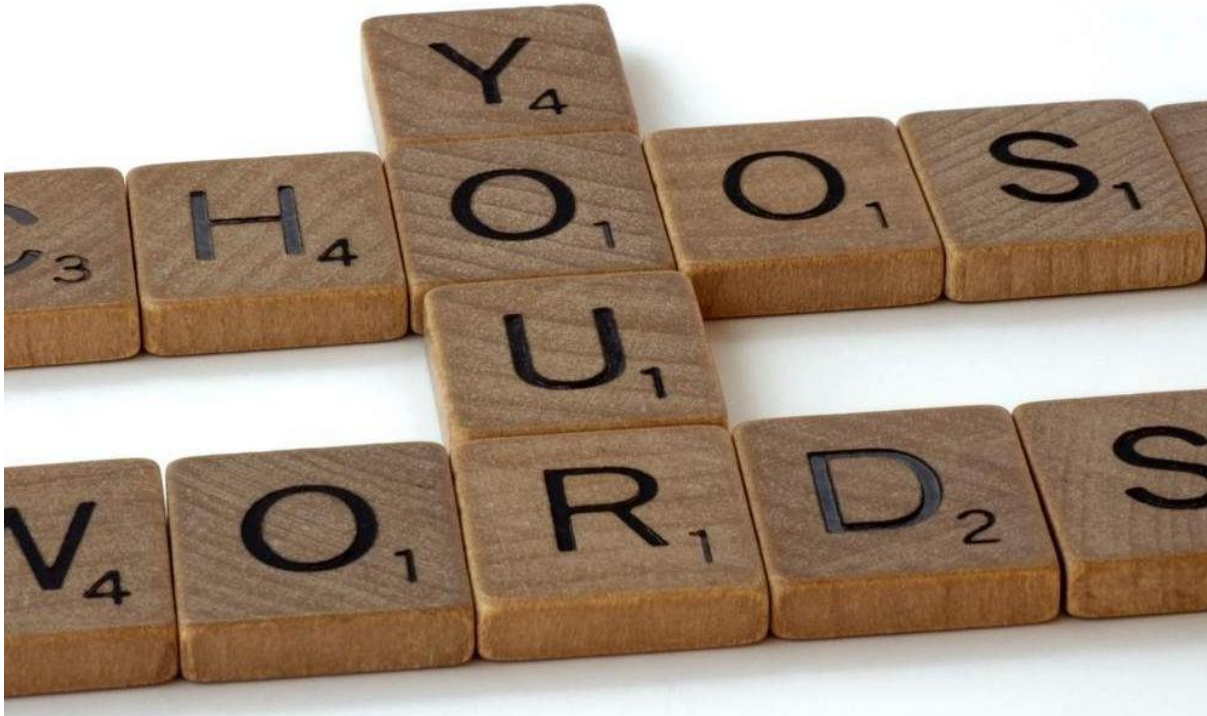
In theorising the conditions of X, Theorist A **evidently** is presenting data that...

(Cambridge Dictionary, 2022)

Using boosters in your work will help you to convey an element of self-assurance about your theory or argument, which in turn, should help to convince the reader you understand the topic.



### Skill 3: Reporting Verbs



Hopefully, by this point, you will understand that when you write academically, you will need to refer to (cite) other people's work or ideas. As such, you will need to use reporting verbs to ensure this is done accurately. Let's look at reporting verbs in more detail.

#### What are reporting verbs?

Simply, these are verbs you will use when you refer to sources in your academic work. You will use them to link the in-text citation to the information you wish to include. For example:

#### Example 1

Student A (2023) assumes that LEAP Online received a digital award in 2018.

## Example 2

Student B (2023) states that LEAP Online received a digital award in 2018.

As demonstrated above, the reporting verbs 'assumes' and 'states' have been used to link the in-text citation to the information. Let's use Example 1 above to break this down further:

**In-text citation:** Student A (2023)

**Reporting Verb:** assumes (has been used with the 'That clause')

**Information:** LEAP Online received a digital award in 2018

While you can use the same reporting verbs in your academic writing, it would be useful to give your work some variation and use different reporting verbs.

However, it is important to note that reporting verbs have different meanings and strengths, depending on what the source you are referring to is trying to say.

For instance, the writer in 'Example 1' above used the reporting verb, 'assumes,' therefore their idea is open to be argued against and is considered weak.

Conversely, the writer in 'Example 2' chose to use the reporting verb, 'states,' which gives the statement a factual tone and is strong.

## Grammar

Reporting verbs are often superseded by the 'That Clause,' which was discussed and explored earlier. However, not all reporting verbs will use this clause. For example:

Upon reflection, Student A (2023) agrees with Student B (2023).

As can be seen from the above example, the reporting verb 'agrees' is followed by 'with.'

## Past and Present tense

It can often be confusing when to use past or present tense, together with reporting verbs to cite information. For example:

### Present tense

The present tense is more common, given it brings historical research into the present day; making it relevant.

The theory presented by Theorist A (2020) explains how...

Researchers conclude that motivation plays a key role in...

## Present perfect tense (have/has + action word + past principle)

Can be used when citing what has been discovered up to the point of writing, or an historical activity continues to the present. For example:

An earlier study has shown that...

In addition to the study of X, related research has also explored...

## Past tense

Using the past tense to report methods or findings from specific research. For example:

Howard (2010) conducted experiments to determine... Howard (2015) discovered several advantages Prescott (2017) studied learning development and found that...

## Examples of reporting verbs

Attached to the 'Additional Resources' section of this tutorial is a table of common reporting verbs according to Hart (2018). They are listed in alphabetical order, together with an indicator of their strength.

## Skill 4: Writing Numbers



It can sometimes be difficult to write numbers in your academic work. This section aims to explore common examples of using numerals or words in your writing. It is important to note that these are general conventions (rules), and you should always refer to your module tutor and/or module guide, if you're unsure.

### Numbers one to ten

- Numbers 0 to ten should be written using words
- Ordinal numbers i.e., first, second, etc. should be written using words

### Numbers 11 onwards

- Numbers from 11 onwards should be written using numbers
- Ordinal numbers from 11 onwards should be written using numbers, plus 'th,' 'rd,' 'nd' or 'st.' For example: 11th or 23rd, 21st, etc.

### Starting a sentence with a number

Generally, use the word, not the numeral, to start each sentence. For example:

1. 20 participants took part in this study.

Should be re-written to:

2. Twenty participants took part in this study.

Or

3. There were 20 participants who took part in this study.

As you can see from example 3 above, the sentence was rewritten so the number wasn't at the beginning. As the number is above 10, numerals were used instead of words.

### To show a comparison

If you wish to show a comparison between small and large numbers, use numerals. For example:

There were 20 participants in the first study, and 40 in the second.

### Large numbers

Ensure commas are used to punctuate large numbers. For example:

According to Worldometer (2023), the population of the UK as of 7 February 2023 is 68,822,574.

### A combination of numerals and words (round to the nearest whole)

If you're using large, round numbers in your academic work, you can use a combination of numerals and words. For example:

According to Worldometer (2023), the population of the UK is approximately 69 million.

Or this can be abbreviated to:

According to Worldometer (2023), the population of the UK is approximately 69m.

'm' represents the word 'million.' Should your number refer to billion, then this can be abbreviated to 'bn' e.g., 69bn. It is important that you are consistent in your academic work. For example, if you decide use 'm' or 'bn' do not write 'million' or 'billion' further on.

### Start to end date/time

To write about a span of time, this can be done using the word 'from,' together with the word 'to' or a hyphen (-). For example:

Semester 1 runs from September to January

Alternatively

Semester 1 runs September – January

Please note, if you use a hyphen, you should exclude the words 'from' and 'to,' as per the above example.

### Date and month

Always write the date before the month. For example:

The lecture is on 7 February.

not

The lecture is on February 7.

### Day, date and month

This should be done to avoid confusion or to add emphasis. For example:

The lecture is on Tuesday 7 February.

### Symbols

Always use numerals and the appropriate symbol. For example:

Percentages: 70%, not 70 percent.

Measurements: 70kg, not 70 kilograms; 3 days, 10  
years, 20 decades.

Currency: £60, not 60-pound.



## Other examples

Other examples of using numerals in your academic work, include:

Type	Example
Percentiles/ quartiles	85 percentile, 2nd quartile
Decimals	5.5
Ratios	4:1
Statistical data	A survey of 20 participants revealed that 1 out of 5...
Fractions	<p>A survey of 20 of participants revealed that 1/5 or one-fifth...</p> <p>As demonstrated, if you use words, always include a hyphen.</p>
Range	<p>10%-20%</p> <p>As demonstrated above, include a hyphen with no space.</p>

## Summary



This tutorial aimed to introduce you to other writing skills that you may need to use to produce a well-written piece of work. Now it's time to explore the final part of the academic writing process, 'Editing and Proofreading'

### Where to go to next

Before you leave, select the button below to complete a short assessment and earn your LEAP Online digital badge.

Once you have completed the assessment, close the tab, return to the 'Academic Writing - Level 2' LEAP Online section and begin the next tutorial.

### Digital Badge

Before you leave, select the button below to complete a short assessment and earn your LEAP Online digital badge.

Academic Writing: Other Writing Techniques

[Moodle assessment](#)



For more support on this topic, consider attending a free workshop at [LEAP Live](#).

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