



Academic Writing in Higher Education

Dr. Anatoly Oleksiyenko

Associate Professor,

Higher Education


Policy and Administration

Faculty of Education

University of Hong Kong

Email: paoleks@hku.hk

Phone: +852-9179-5838



**WHAT DO YOU NEED TO
KNOW
BEFORE YOU WRITE
YOUR PAPER?**



Important Conditions

- Know why you write
- Target the problem
- Analyze local and global literature regarding the problem
- Choose and know your readers



Preparation Period

- Bibliography
- Selectivity
- Research gap
- Unit of analysis



Preparation Period

- Regular (scheduled) writing
- 3-4 hours of immersion time
- Tranquility and inaccessibility
- Easy access to the internet (but not FB or other social media, email or cell)



Preparation Period

- Don't anticipate "perfect text" (?)
- Begin with bullet-points (sections, subsections, paragraphs, and sentences)
- Be ready to edit your text at least 3 times before submission to editors
- Have someone you trust to provide you with very "tough comments"
- Have all the data ready for the structure that follows



Research Paper Structure

- Abstract
- Introduction
- Your focus
- Literature review
- Methodology
- Findings
- Discussion
- Concluding remarks



Abstract

(200 w)

- Problem statement
- Choice of methodology
- Major findings
- Significance for research and practice



Introduction

(600-800 w)


- Problem in the general context
- Causes and effects of the problem
- What has been already learnt about this problem?
- What is not known and why?
- How are you going to handle this gap in this particular paper?
- What have you chosen to investigate and why?
- What contribution will this make?



Literature Review

(1,500-2,000 w)

- The key line of argument in the selected literature
- Key theoretical and methodological issues in this selection that relate to your **unit of analysis**
- What would make your choice of the research gap meaningful to explore?



Methodology

(1,000 words)


- Explain why you have chosen to do a qualitative or quantitative or mixed data collection and analysis
- Tell how you defined relevance of your sample as it relates to your unit of analysis
- Elaborate how you collected data
- Share challenges and limitations of your study
- Explain how you analyzed data



Findings

(1,500-2,000 w)

- Structure findings in sub-sections
- Prioritize their significance
- Present details without philosophical deliberations
- Be precise and descriptive as much as possible



Discussion

(1,000-1,500 w)

- This is not any kind of discussion
- Remember that you have to:
 - **s**peak with the community of scholars
 - **e**mphasize the importance of some findings
 - **c**onnect or juxtapose these findings with other studies (their findings, and theories)
 - **s**pecify philosophical, policy or practice implications
 - **t**ell what might be important to investigate in the future



Extras

- ▶ Concluding remarks
 - ▶ Summarize what you have done and achieved
- ▶ Acknowledgments
 - ▶ Thanks to grant providers, participants, colleagues
- ▶ Disclaimers
 - ▶ Any notifications about your undeclared affiliations
- ▶ Appendixes
 - ▶ All additional information



Further Reading

Bailey, S. (2014). *Academic writing: a handbook for international students*. Routledge.

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Oshima, A., & Hogue, A. (2007). *Introduction to academic writing*. Pearson/Longman.

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Sword, H. (2012). *Stylish academic writing*. Harvard University Press.

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Thompson, G. (2001). Interaction in academic writing: Learning to argue with the reader. *Applied linguistics*, 22(1), 58-78.