BEYOND THE PAGE
academic and professional writing for EFL students

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Contents

Authors' preface

Beyond the Page: Academic and Professional Writing for EFL Students is a coursebook designed primarily for in-house use, specifically tailored to final-year undergraduate students majoring in English at the "Blaže Koneski" Faculty of Philology in Skopje, who aim to develop and refine their academic and professional writing skills in English as a foreign language. These are students who have built a strong foundation in general English and academic writing in earlier stages of their studies, and are now moving towards more specialised, discipline-appropriate writing for academic and professional purposes.

This coursebook has been carefully structured to meet the specific needs of these learners, bridging the gap between university coursework and the demands of academic research, postgraduate study, and international employment. It is composed of three interconnected parts: *Foundations of Academic Writing in the EFL Context*, *Applied Writing for Real-World Contexts: Academic and Professional Communication*, and *Academic Paper Writing in the Humanities: Research, Structure, Style*. Together, they provide an integrated and practical framework for understanding and producing high-level writing in English.

Each section is guided by clear objectives and offers a mix of theoretical insights, practical tools, annotated examples, targeted exercises, and longer writing tasks. These components are intended not only to improve students' fluency and accuracy, but also to enhance their ability to think critically, express ideas persuasively, and engage with disciplinary discourse in English. Alongside a wide variety of writing genres, students are also introduced to key academic conventions, citation practices, and the ethical dimensions of authorship and collaboration in academic contexts.

The structure of the book allows for both sequential study and modular use. While each section stands on its own, themes such as critical thinking, cross-cultural awareness, and digital literacy weave through the coursebook, providing coherence and a sense of progression. The inclusion of sample writing tasks, annotated texts, and peer review forms reflects a student-centred approach and is intended to foster autonomy, reflection, and deeper engagement with writing as a process.

The coursebook is written at a C1–C2 level in line with the CEFR, and presupposes a working knowledge of English grammar, stylistic variation, and general linguistic and writing concepts. While it introduces advanced writing

practices, it does so accessibly and with close attention to the challenges faced by EFL students writing in the academic context.

This coursebook has been created with careful attention to the challenges, realities, and aspirations of its intended users, and it is the authors' sincere hope that it proves to be both useful and inspiring. Gratitude is extended to all those who offered their insight, support, and encouragement during the preparation of this work. Any errors or omissions remain the sole responsibility of the authors.

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Part I

**Foundations of Academic Writing
in the EFL Context**

1. Introduction

Writing skills, like all other components of the EFL learning process, are acquired, developed, and refined over time. Whether practiced in the (E)FL classroom, in first language (L1) contexts, or beyond formal education, writing is a complex, multi-stage process that extends well beyond the production of a final text. In fact, these stages, ranging from planning and drafting to revising and editing, often play a more critical role in the development of writing proficiency than the final product itself.

Like speaking, writing is classified as a productive skill, as it involves the active generation of language rather than its reception. Proficiency in productive skills offers numerous personal and professional benefits. Moreover, these skills are closely interconnected: research indicates that improved spoken fluency can have a positive influence on written language competence.

Writing proficiency is also strongly linked to reading skills, highlighting the substantial overlap among the various competencies involved in learning a foreign language. This interconnectedness underscores the need for an integrated approach to language instruction that fosters development across all modalities.

1.1. Background Context

This coursebook has been developed as an in-house resource to support English majors at the "Blaže Koneski" Faculty of Philology in Skopje in strengthening their EFL writing skills and expressing themselves with greater fluency and confidence in written English. It represents the outcome of many years of research and pedagogical practice, originating from the *Writing University Project*, a collaborative initiative launched in the early 2000s between the Department of English Language and Literature and the British Council – Skopje. The project was carried out under the expert guidance of Dr Teresa O'Brien of the University of Manchester, United Kingdom.

The project team invested significant effort in designing a curriculum, piloting it at various stages, and developing and adapting evaluation rubrics and band scales to establish objective assessment criteria. Revisions and changes were incorporated throughout the process. What began as an initiative aimed at helping students more effectively tackle writing tasks in their literature exams has since evolved into a comprehensive writing programme integrated into the *Modern English Language* classes across all four years of study. The results have been tangible, with noticeable improvements in students' writing skills and overall linguistic competence.

The fourth year, for which this book is specifically intended, focuses on more advanced writing tasks. These include various types of formal and informal letters, the appropriate use of register and tone, and the structure and formatting of academic papers, as one of the primary aims is to equip students with the necessary skills to successfully complete their final graduation paper, a core requirement for obtaining their degree.

In addition to these focal areas, the writing classes also address a range of concepts integral to the writing process. These include brainstorming techniques and strategies, the role and types of feedback, the various stages of drafting and editing, which collectively reinforce the understanding of writing as a process, as well as issues related to plagiarism and academic integrity. Attention is also given to the notion of style as it relates to different writing genres, the use of linking and cohesive devices, and other key elements that contribute to effective written communication.

As times change, so do the topics and approaches to writing. In today's context of rapid technological advancement, students are increasingly exposed to the influence of Artificial Intelligence (AI), including tools such as ChatGPT. This inevitably raises questions about the role of such technologies in the writing process, whether they can be used as supportive tools, and to what extent their use is pedagogically and ethically appropriate.

As we turn to the specific writing topics addressed in the final-year *Modern English Language* course, it is worthwhile to (re)examine some of the key concepts associated with EFL writing, particularly those introduced in the earlier years of study at the Department of English Language and Literature. The concepts outlined in the following section do not constitute an exhaustive or definitive list, but rather reflect selected elements aligned with the Department's curriculum. This coursebook is, after all, shaped by a desire to support the specific learning needs of these students.

Beyond the Page: Academic and Professional Writing for EFL Students builds on that foundation and is intended as a practical resource within the wider *Modern English Language* curriculum. It offers structured guidance through the key aspects of academic writing, with tasks, examples, and explanations tailored to the needs and proficiency level of final-year EFL students. Its aim is not only to support students in mastering specific genres of academic writing but also to foster greater awareness of audience, register, and rhetorical purpose. By working through the materials systematically, students will develop the skills necessary to plan, draft, revise, and refine their writing in a way that meets academic expectations both at university and beyond. Ultimately, this coursebook aims to empower students to become more confident, independent, and critically aware writers, well prepared for the demands of academic and professional communication.

2. Selected fundamental concepts and ideas

The concepts and ideas explored in this section have been selected based on the authors' long-standing involvement in the *Writing University Project*, from its inception through its implementation, as well as their active role in curriculum development and their extensive research in the field. These insights are grounded in years of practical experience and scholarly work, including papers published in international journals and presented at academic conferences and workshops.

Acquiring, developing, and refining writing skills is essential for achieving communicative competence in any language. In a foreign language context, however, writing takes on particular significance. It engages learners in complex cognitive processes that support second language (L2) acquisition by prompting them to think explicitly about how to organise and express ideas. Writing not only provides opportunities for reflection, processing of meaning, and creativity, but it also plays a key role in bridging the transition from early language courses to later literature-focused modules. These latter stages typically demand greater mastery of academic writing and the ability to produce more sustained and structured texts.

2.1. Discipline-Specific Discourse

A key component of advanced academic writing for EFL students lies in mastering *discipline-specific discourse*, as academic disciplines have distinct ways of writing, arguing, and presenting knowledge. For EFL students, recognising these patterns is essential. Final-year EFL students need to learn to align their writing with disciplinary conventions, essentially, the 'language' of their field. This means recognising how argumentation, evidence, and voice differ between, for example, a literary analysis and an applied linguistics research paper. By this stage, it is vital that students exhibit an understanding of the stylistic, structural, and rhetorical norms associated with their particular academic field, be it linguistics, literature, or applied language studies. For instance, an analytical literary essay differs significantly from a case study in applied linguistics, not only in structure but also in tone, evidentiary expectations, and the use of personal voice. Literature essays often use interpretive analysis with textual evidence, whereas applied linguistics reports may use IMRaD format (Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion), a widely used structure in scientific and academic writing, especially for empirical research papers in disciplines such as linguistics, psychology, education, and the natural and social sciences.

2.2. Academic Argumentation

Another core concept is *academic argumentation*, which requires students to develop and sustain a clear, logically structured argument throughout a text. This means formulating a precise thesis statement, organising ideas into cohesive paragraphs, and supporting claims with credible evidence. Additionally, strong academic writing anticipates counterarguments and addresses them constructively, thereby demonstrating a balanced and critical engagement with the topic. Argumentation at this level is not just about presenting facts but showing awareness of the ongoing scholarly dialogue in which the writer is participating.

2.3. Research Literacy

Closely linked to this is *research literacy*, which goes beyond simply locating sources. Final-year students should be capable of identifying relevant academic literature, evaluating the credibility of sources, and integrating them effectively into their writing. This includes summarising, paraphrasing, quoting, and synthesising information from multiple texts. Crucially, students must also position their own arguments in relation to existing scholarship, showing how their contribution either aligns with, extends, or challenges current thinking.

2.4. Cohesion and Coherence

Equally important is *cohesion* and *coherence*, two aspects of writing that ensure clarity and flow at both the sentence and paragraph level. *Cohesion* refers to the way different parts of a text are connected so that ideas flow logically and smoothly from one sentence, paragraph, or section to another, while *coherence* refers to the logical progression of ideas across the entire text. Academic writing that lacks either will appear disjointed and difficult to follow, no matter how strong the underlying ideas may be.

Within the context of cohesion and coherence in academic writing, *linking devices*, also called *cohesive devices, connectors, transition markers,* or *transitional expressions*, play a vital role in guiding the reader through the writer's ideas. While *cohesion* refers to the surface-level grammatical and lexical connections that hold a text together, *coherence* involves the logical flow and clarity of ideas throughout the text. *Linking devices* help achieve both by signalling how one idea relates to another, thereby guiding the reader smoothly through the argument or exposition.

They are essential for maintaining a sense of continuity and logic, preventing the writing from appearing fragmented or disconnected. These devices

serve a variety of functions depending on the relationship between the ideas being expressed, such as addition, contrast, cause and effect, clarification, comparison, sequencing, and summarising.

The placement and punctuation of these devices also affect how effectively they function within a text. Nevertheless, it is important for students not to rely too heavily on explicit linking words. Overusing them, or applying them in a formulaic way, can result in mechanical or unnatural writing. In many cases, coherence can also be maintained through more subtle means such as lexical cohesion, parallel structure, and thematic progression, where each sentence builds naturally from the previous one without necessarily requiring overt transitional markers. Developing this awareness of both explicit and implicit cohesion is essential for producing sophisticated, reader-friendly academic texts.

2.5. Advanced Grammar and Style

In terms of *advanced grammar* and *style*, final-year students must refine their control of grammatical structures, using complex sentences with clarity and precision. They are expected to write with a formal, objective tone, often avoiding first-person references unless genre-appropriate. Stylistic features such as nominalisation, passive voice (where appropriate), and the strategic use of modality (e.g., "may," "could," "likely") help align their writing with academic norms. At this stage, grammar should serve meaning, allowing students to express nuanced ideas with fluency and accuracy.

Fluency in this context extends beyond grammatical accuracy; it reflects the students' ability to express complex ideas clearly, precisely, and with stylistic control, and it entails using a range of syntactic structures and cohesive devices to produce text that reads smoothly and logically. It involves the confident manipulation of grammatical forms, such as complex and compound sentences, passive constructions, nominalisations, and varied clause structures, without compromising clarity. Thus, arguments are structured with a natural flow, there is shifting between general claims and specific evidence, and tone or emphasis is adjusted as needed.

Fluency does not imply verbosity or excessive complexity; rather, it means achieving clarity and sophistication through well-controlled expression. This includes making stylistic choices that improve readability and rhetorical impact, such as using parallelism for emphasis, varying sentence length and rhythm, and maintaining consistency in verb tense and point of view. In addition, it displays the students' command of academic register by avoiding colloquialisms, contractions, vague terms, and redundancy. Ultimately, fluency in academic writing shows that the student is able to handle language in a

way that is both linguistically competent and rhetorically effective, allowing for nuanced expression of thought.

Lexical and *grammatical variety* are essential indicators of advanced academic writing proficiency, reflecting both linguistic range and stylistic strength. *Lexical variety* refers to the ability to select and use precise, discipline-appropriate vocabulary without unnecessary repetition. This involves the use of synonyms, paraphrasing techniques, and nominal or verbal variations to avoid redundancy while maintaining clarity and consistency. Control over abstract and technical terms, collocations, and academic phraseology results in a more authoritative and professional tone. *Grammatical variety*, on the other hand, involves the flexible and purposeful use of different sentence structures, including subordination, coordination, passive and active voice, cleft sentences, and varied clause types. Such diversity prevents the writing from becoming monotonous and allows the information to be structured in ways that highlight key ideas and control emphasis. Both lexical and grammatical variety should serve a rhetorical function, improving the clarity, persuasiveness, and fluency of the text rather than introducing inconsistency or ambiguity.

Tone in academic writing refers to the writer's attitude towards the subject, argument, or audience as conveyed through language choices. In advanced-level academic work, tone is typically objective, measured, and formal, and it needs to be controlled in a way that reflects intellectual detachment, scholarly rigour, and respect for multiple perspectives. This means avoiding emotionally charged or overly assertive language, while still expressing a clear stance when appropriate. Tone is established not only through word choice but also through syntactic structures, such as the use of hedging to express caution or probability, and modality to indicate degrees of certainty. Misjudging tone can result in writing that appears biased, overly casual, or lacking in credibility. Therefore, mastering tone requires an awareness of the disciplinary expectations and the ability to make deliberate stylistic decisions that align with those expectations.

Register refers to the level of formality and the stylistic conventions appropriate to a particular type of writing or communicative situation. There are five basic levels that describe different types of register or formality.

- *High formal*. It is used to address the Queen, an Archbishop, a President, or a Prime Minister. It may also be found in legal documents, academic oratory, historical proclamations, or highly stylised academic prose in philosophy or literary theory.

- *Formal*. It is the appropriate standard for academic writing. It avoids contractions, slang, phrasal verbs, and first-person pronouns, unless

the genre permits it. The sentences in this register are grammatically complete, the vocabulary is precise and subject-specific, and modality is often used to express caution or degrees of certainty. This register values objectivity, clarity, and professional distance, and it is commonly used in research papers, essays, dissertations, reports, and scholarly publications.

– *Neutral.* It is clear, direct, and accessible, often used in instructional materials, textbook explanations, workplace communication, and journalistic writing. Though it avoids slang and colloquialisms, it may include contractions and more common vocabulary. It is acceptable in some academic genres such as reflective journals, discussion forum posts, or materials aimed at a general audience.

– *Informal.* It is characterised by colloquial language, contractions, phrasal verbs, idioms, and sometimes personal anecdotes. This register reflects spoken language more than written and is suitable for private emails, friendly conversations, blogs, or dialogue in fiction. In addition, it lacks the precision and objectivity required in academic writing and tends to be unsuitable for most scholarly contexts.

– *Vulgar.* This register represents profane, obscene, or crude language, often used to shock or express strong emotion. It is socially marked, generally offensive, and never appropriate in academic or professional writing.

2.6. Critical Thinking and Originality

Academic writing also demands *critical thinking* and *originality*, both of which distinguish more advanced work from mere summary or description. Final-year students must demonstrate the ability to evaluate sources, question assumptions, and draw independent conclusions based on evidence. Originality does not necessarily mean introducing radically new ideas, but rather engaging with existing ones in thoughtful and insightful ways. This could involve identifying gaps in the literature, highlighting contradictions, or offering a new interpretation of familiar material.

2.7. Process Writing

Another essential idea is the understanding of *writing as a process*. Rather than viewing writing as a one-time act of composition, it should be approached as a recursive process involving planning, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading. Students must be open to feedback, both from peers and

instructors, and learn to reflect critically on their own work. This process-oriented mindset improves not only the quality of the final product but also students' long-term growth in writing proficiency.

Writing is a skill that can be acquired and developed over time and, as it is a process, it consists of different stages, each involving distinct cognitive and practical activities. The writing process is best understood as flexible and adaptive, not mechanical or linear, and though covering it in stages is useful from a pedagogical perspective, especially for EFL students and majors, real writing is more fluid and dynamic.

As previously noted, the process is not linear in that writing is recursive; writers move back and forth between stages as needed. Writing rarely follows a strict, step-by-step sequence. Writers often go back to prewriting while revising, do additional research after drafting, rework ideas during editing, and make major content changes just before submitting the final product.

Furthermore, there is no one universal 'right' way where writing is concerned; different people use different strategies. Some prefer to plan everything before writing, while others discover their ideas through the act of writing. In addition, different backgrounds, both cultural and educational, may also affect how this process is approached. Thus, what works for one writer may not suit another.

Another component that plays a role is the fact that tasks and genres vary and some tasks may skip or compress stages, while others demand more time in revision or research. The writing process changes depending on the *purpose* (e.g., a persuasive essay versus a lab report), on the *discipline* (e.g., the humanities versus the sciences), as well as on the *length* and *complexity* of the text.

Cognitive and emotional factors are also involved, as writing involves *cognitive processing* (organising thoughts, analysing information), as well as *emotional engagement* (confidence, frustration, motivation), and a writer's mental state can push them to skip, revisit, or prolong stages.

Finally, the boundaries between stages are not cleanly separated; they are blurred and they bleed into one another. In practice, stages like revising and editing often overlap, revising a paragraph for clarity may also involve fixing grammar; drafting can naturally involve self-editing or restructuring.

Bearing all this in mind, we may typically divide the writing process into five key stages, though this is certainly not set in stone, since, as we have previously noted, it is challenging to definitively fix the number of stages.

The five main stages that are involved in the writing process are as follows:

Prewriting → Drafting → Revising → Editing → Final submission

The *prewriting stage* is crucial for planning and preparation, for organising thoughts and ideas before beginning to write, especially within formal academic contexts. It begins with a thorough understanding of the task, which involves carefully reading the assignment prompt or guidelines to determine the required genre, such as an argumentative essay, research paper, or literature review. Equally important is clarifying the audience and purpose of the text, bearing in mind that academic writing is typically formal, objective, and directed at an educated readership. Ideas can be generated through various techniques such as brainstorming, mind mapping, or responding to guiding questions (eliciting) to develop relevant content. Conducting research is also essential at this stage; credible academic sources can be gathered and notes taken using paraphrasing rather than copying directly. Finally, outlining the structure of the text, typically consisting of an introduction, body paragraphs, and a conclusion, helps to provide a clear structure for the drafting phase that follows.

At the *drafting stage* of the writing process the focus is on composing the first version and turning ideas into a coherent and well-structured text. Rather than aiming for perfection, the priority should be on developing content and following the logical flow outlined during the prewriting phase. It is helpful to begin with a clear thesis statement that sets out the main argument or purpose of the text and use topic sentences to guide each paragraph and ensure that ideas are supported with relevant evidence, examples, and appropriate academic citations. At this point, there is no need to focus too heavily on grammar or vocabulary; the aim is to get ideas down on the page. Writing directly in English rather than translating from the student's native language helps maintain natural phrasing and clarity of expression.

The *revising stage* introduces a higher level of academic rigour, which means that students need to review their draft with a critical and analytical perspective in order to improve their content and structure. This would begin by evaluating whether the thesis statement is clearly articulated and consistently supported throughout the text, whether each paragraph demonstrates unity by focusing on a single main idea, and whether coherence is achieved through a logical progression of thoughts. Transitions between ideas should be refined to ensure smooth and meaningful connections across the text. Revisions may involve adding, rephrasing, or removing content to enhance clarity, strengthen logic, or improve relevance. At this point, feedback, peer and/or teacher, is extremely useful, and reading the draft aloud may help identify awkward phrasing and evaluate overall flow.

The *editing stage* focuses on refining the linguistic and stylistic accuracy of the text, which is essential in academic writing. It involves correcting grammar, spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure to ensure clarity and

precision. It is important that attention is also given to word choice, and that vague or informal expressions are replaced with more specific and academically appropriate vocabulary. Consistency in verb tense and subject-verb agreement need to be maintained throughout the text, and a relevant academic style guide, such as APA or MLA, should be adhered to in terms of in-text citations and reference lists.

In academic contexts, the final stage of the writing process typically involves *submitting a polished version of the text*. At this point, attention must be paid to formatting requirements, including font type and size, line spacing, margins, and adherence to the appropriate citation style. It is important that the submission includes all necessary components, such as the title page, abstract (if required), introduction, main body, conclusion, and reference list. Checklists may be useful at this stage, which would help avoid overlooking mistakes.

2.8. Genre Flexibility

Genre flexibility refers to the ability to adapt writing to various academic genres and communicative purposes. By the final year of their studies, students should be comfortable producing research articles, literature reviews, critical essays, argumentative papers, and reflective pieces, each with its own conventions. Understanding the rhetorical expectations of different genres enables students to communicate more effectively within academic contexts.

2.9. Cross-Cultural Rhetorical Awareness

Cross-cultural rhetorical awareness plays a crucial role in academic writing for EFL students. Many rhetorical preferences, such as direct thesis statements, linear argumentation, and explicit signposting (the use of words and phrases that guide the reader through the structure and progression of an argument, indicating what has been covered, what is coming next, and how sections relate to each other), may differ from those valued in students' native cultures. Developing awareness of these differences allows learners to adapt their writing style to meet the expectations of English-medium academic discourse without losing their individual voice. This intercultural competence is especially important for students intending to pursue postgraduate study or publish in international contexts.

2.10. Brainstorming Techniques

It is very important that writing is presented and understood as a process, with an emphasis on the different stages it is composed of, rather than a

focus on the final product. In fact, this is one of the issues that may arise when introducing writing in the EFL classroom - students' misconception that you either know how to write or you do not, that you are either good at writing or that you are not. Things are very rarely black or white, either/or, and this is illustrated nowhere better than here, as there are different strategies and techniques that may be employed to help students acquire, develop and improve their (EFL) writing skills.

As previously noted, the writing process can be roughly divided into five main stages, and those five can be further grouped into three overarching phases: prewriting, writing, and rewriting. One of the first, and potentially most crucial stages, falls within the prewriting stage: that of *brainstorming*. This is where students prepare to write, and where they need to organise and consolidate their thoughts and ideas, deciding what will be kept and developed, and what will be discarded. In fact, the more effort and care put into this stage, the more smoothly the remaining stages of the writing process will proceed.

Different brainstorming techniques may be employed for different reasons, such as logistics – class size and available time, as well as students' level of proficiency. Ultimately, experimenting with various approaches will allow students to identify what works best for them. In addition, it is always more fun to vary the activities and to try out new things, which may lead to unexpected, positive, results. As such, we may mention the following ways which may be used to brainstorm new ideas, presented in no particular order of importance or effectiveness.

Eliciting

Eliciting has to do with asking questions. Specifically, by systematically asking *Who? What? When? Where? Why?* and *How?* students can explore a topic from multiple angles. This technique is useful because it fosters critical thinking and helps uncover gaps in understanding or areas requiring further research. For example, when writing about a certain issue, students might ask questions such as *Who is affected? What causes it? Why is it significant?* This method supports analytical writing and enables students to move towards constructing more nuanced arguments.

Listing

Listing is a technique which involves generating a straightforward list, or bullet points, of words, phrases, or short sentences related to the topic. It is a quick and efficient way to brainstorm supporting ideas, arguments, examples or questions, and it is especially helpful in the writing of longer pieces which contain multiple sections (e.g., introduction, body paragraphs, conclu-

sion), as it provides a preliminary inventory of content. It is fast and simple, and it allows students to narrow down their thoughts, as well as to rearrange and categorise their points later on, when moving into the outlining phase.

Keyword Brainstorming

In the context of the listing technique above, students may also find it useful to generate a bank of relevant vocabulary and academic phrases connected to the topic and the bullet points they have compiled previously, which they can later incorporate into their writing. This technique strengthens both the lexical range and the topic relevance. Students essentially generate a list of key terms, phrases, and academic vocabulary associated with the topic, which may include general terms, discipline-specific lexis, or transition signals that would be useful for structuring arguments. By having this content in front of them, arranged and categorised in this way, students may also think about additional synonyms or academic equivalents for more informal expressions, which would also reinforce register awareness.

Double-Entry Journals

This technique is a reflective technique that encourages deeper engagement with the topic. Listing, in its simplest form, is broader and less structured, and it might be seen as the 'umbrella' technique, with keyword brainstorming and double-entry journals as specific, higher-order variations. All three techniques in this category, listing, keyword brainstorming, and double-entry journals, essentially involve generating and organising ideas in written form, often in bullet points, columns, or itemised formats. However, where keyword brainstorming is essentially a focused listing activity (students are creating a targeted list of terms and phrases rather than general ideas), serving a lexical and stylistic function and preparing students to use topic-specific vocabulary effectively, the *double-entry journals* technique can be seen as a structured, reflective form of listing that goes a step further by encouraging metacognitive engagement, supporting critical thinking and deeper content engagement, particularly with texts or prior knowledge, and not just idea generation. It also enables students to move from surface-level observation to analytical writing. Students basically divide a page into two columns and in one column they note down their initial thoughts, questions, or relevant content, while in the other column they respond critically, make connections, or expand on those ideas.

Discussion

Discussions are always an interesting technique where writing is concerned, and they may start out between two students and then evolve into a

group or even a whole class discussion. In this collaborative technique, students first reflect individually on a topic, then pair up to exchange ideas, and finally share their thoughts with the larger group. This process encourages active participation, builds confidence in expressing ideas, and exposes students to diverse perspectives. It also provides excellent opportunities to practise academic discussion skills, negotiate meaning, and expand topic-specific vocabulary in a supportive setting. This, in turn, supports oral fluency, critical thinking, and exposure to alternative viewpoints. New ideas can be bounced around individually, in pairs, groups, or even as a whole class, and they may be done so through various activities.

Visual Prompts

In line with the previously mentioned technique above, *visual prompts*, such as photographs, charts, or infographics, may be used to stimulate discussion and idea generation, particularly for descriptive, narrative, or reflective writing tasks. Students respond to the relevant visual prompt with associations or questions by brainstorming what they observe, infer, or feel. This technique is especially helpful for visual learners, and it allows students to activate their background knowledge.

Clustering

Clustering, also known as *mind mapping*, is a method which involves creating a visual representation of ideas by placing a central concept in the middle of the page and drawing branches outward to related subtopics, examples, supporting details, arguments, or associated themes. This technique illustrates the non-linear nature of thought and is effective for exploring the scope of a topic as well as identifying logical groupings, as it helps students explore the relationships between ideas and build topic depth and breadth.

Categorisation

Categorisation, like the clustering technique, is also a visual method which involves grouping related ideas, this time under broader thematic headings. Students can use *tree diagrams* to organise subpoints into branches stemming from various central categories. This technique is particularly effective as it encourages logical organisation and helps students identify the structure their writing might take before moving on to the outlining phase. It also supports the development of paragraph unity and coherence.

Freewriting

Freewriting is a timed exercise in which students write non-stop for a set period, typically five to ten minutes, sometimes even less, without pausing

to edit or censor themselves. The aim is to generate a continuous stream of thoughts related to the topic, allowing ideas to emerge organically. This technique helps students overcome the fear of the blank page, tap into their prior knowledge, and identify potential angles for further development. It is especially useful when students are unsure where to start, as it encourages fluency and reduces anxiety about language accuracy in the initial stages. Essentially, students write continuously for a set period without worrying about grammar, structure, or cohesion, their aim to generate raw ideas related to the topic, bypassing overthinking and surface subconscious associations or opinions.

3. Academic integrity

Academic integrity is a vital component of academic writing, and it encompasses the ethical standards, intellectual honesty, and mutual respect that define scholarly communities. It involves the responsible use of sources, accurate reporting of findings, and clear distinction between one's own ideas and those of others. Essentially, academic integrity is about transparency and accountability, which means that writers are expected to acknowledge the contributions of others through proper citation, avoid plagiarism in all its forms, and present their arguments and evidence truthfully. These practices are not simply following procedure; they show a commitment to ethical scholarship and help build credibility within the academic discourse.

In our context, in the final-year of studies, academic integrity carries even greater significance. As the writing tasks become more complex and independent, it is expected that students will assume full responsibility in terms of the authenticity and accuracy of the work they complete and submit. This includes correctly citing a variety of sources, paraphrasing effectively, and demonstrating a clear understanding of academic conventions. Maintaining academic integrity also supports the development of the student writer's academic voice and critical thinking skills.

Academic integrity is more than a set of rules, it is a sustained practice that shapes how students read, think, write, and collaborate in an academic setting. At this point, as final-year EFL students, this practice demands taking conscious responsibility and making ethical decisions, from properly referencing sources and avoiding plagiarism to evaluating materials critically and contributing fairly in group work. Essentially, it is a sign of intellectual maturity and a foundation for trust between student and teacher, between writer and reader.

3.1. Citation and Referencing

To avoid plagiarism, credit must be given to other people whose ideas have been used in the writing of a certain assignment or paper. It goes without saying that when writing, students have the right to express their own opinions, as well as the right to use ideas of other people to support their arguments and draw conclusions. However, it is essential to clearly distinguish between original ideas and those sourced from others. This not only ensures academic integrity but also demonstrates the writer's understanding of the value of existing research in developing their own arguments.

As such, an essential aspect of maintaining academic integrity is the proper use of citation and referencing. *Citation*, whether in-text or in the form of a reference list or bibliography, ensures that credit is given to original authors and that the writer does not misrepresent borrowed content as their own. It is important to note that works that are not in the bibliography should not be cited. *Referencing* allows writers to show where their information and ideas come from, helping readers trace the intellectual origin of a claim or argument.

As final-year EFL students, mastering these conventions is of vital significance, as it reflects both language proficiency and academic maturity. Students are expected to distinguish clearly between direct quotations, paraphrased content, and original thought, and to apply the relevant and appropriate citation style, such as APA or MLA, consistently and accurately. Proper referencing strengthens credibility by supporting arguments with reliable sources and helping students avoid plagiarism.

3.1.1. Common Citation Issues

Despite understanding the importance of referencing, (EFL) students may sometimes encounter challenges when they need to apply citation conventions. One common issue is the inadequate distinction between paraphrased content and direct quotations, which may result in unintentional plagiarism. This typically comes from limited lexical range or uncertainty about how much a paraphrase must differ from the original text. Similarly, sometimes in-text citations may be omitted due to the belief that changing the wording is enough, or citation styles may be applied inconsistently, especially when switching between sources or combining multiple types of information.

These issues can be resolved, however. For example, students can compare their paraphrased versions with the original text, focusing on both vocabulary and sentence structure, to reach a stage of acceptable rewording. Furthermore, using citation management tools or templates for in-text references and bibliographies can help with consistency and reduce formatting

errors, and practicing various source integration strategies such as summarising, paraphrasing, and quoting will, over time, help students gain control over both the language and the expected academic conventions.

The Table below summarises the most common citation issues, their underlying cause, as well as a strategy that may be implemented in its resolution.

Issue	Underlying cause	Resolution strategy
Unclear paraphrasing (too close to the original)	Limited vocabulary and grammatical range; unclear understanding of paraphrasing boundaries	Focus on paraphrasing in stages (word level → sentence level → idea level); compare original and rewritten versions; focus on restructuring ideas, not just replacing words
Missing in-text citations	Misconception that paraphrased ideas do not need referencing	Note that *all* borrowed ideas (quoted, paraphrased, or summarised) require citation
Overuse of direct quotations	Lack of confidence in expressing ideas in English; fear of misrepresenting the original meaning	Remember when quoting is appropriate; prioritise paraphrasing and summarising for clarity and flow
Inconsistent or incorrect citation style (APA, MLA, etc.)	Confusion between citation formats; insufficient familiarity with style guides	Use citation templates; use citation generators; consistent use of one style throughout writing assignments
No clear distinction between personal ideas and source material	Poor integration of sources; unclear voice in writing	Use signal phrases and reporting verbs (for example, *According to X…*, *Y argues that…*)
Incomplete or incorrect reference list	Lack of attention to detail; misunderstanding of required reference elements	Use annotated examples of full reference entries; use checklists for final submission; peer-review of reference lists

Table 1. Common citation issues, underlying cause, and resolution strategies

3.2. Plagiarism

Closely tied to citation and referencing is the concept of plagiarism, which constitutes one of the most serious breaches of academic integrity. *Plagiarism* involves presenting someone else's words, ideas, structure, or data as one's own, whether intentionally or unintentionally. In academic writing, even a well-meant omission, such as forgetting to include a citation or paraphrasing too closely to the original, can result in academic misconduct.

To avoid plagiarism, it is important that students develop both technical awareness and critical judgement. This begins with understanding the different types of plagiarism, such as *direct copying, mosaic plagiarism* (*patchwriting*)*,* and *self-plagiarism*, explained in greater detail below, in the Table in section 3.2.1. Types of Plagiarism, and recognising that all forms are equally unacceptable in academic contexts.

There are strategies, however, that may be employed to prevent plagiarism, such as keeping detailed notes of sources during the research process, using quotation marks for any directly copied material, citing all ideas that are not common knowledge, and allowing time for careful paraphrasing. In addition, learning how to distinguish between original thought and borrowed material is essential, as is developing a clear academic voice that integrates external sources without being dependent on them. Overall, it is something that is improved over time and with raised awareness among all the participants in the process. Ultimately, avoiding plagiarism is not just about compliance; it is about helping students build confidence and competence to engage independently and ethically in the academic community.

3.2.1. Types of Plagiarism

Type	Description	Example
Direct plagiarism	Copying someone else's words exactly without quotation marks or citation.	Inserting a paragraph from a published article into your essay without any attribution.
Mosaic plagiarism (patchwriting)	Mixing phrases or sentence structures from a source with minimal changes and no proper citation.	Changing a few words in a sentence from a source but keeping its structure.
Paraphrasing plagiarism	Rewriting another person's idea in your own words without citing the original.	Summarising a journal's argument in your essay but not including a citation.
Self-plagiarism	Reusing your own previously submitted work without acknowledgement or permission.	Submitting parts of your old paper in a new assignment as if it were new work.

Type	Description	Example
Incomplete attribution	Citing a source but not clearly marking quoted or borrowed material.	Citing an author but failing to use quotation marks around copied text.

Table 2. Types of plagiarism

3.2.2. Plagiarism Self-Checklist

The following self-checklist may be used to avoid potential unintentional plagiarism, which is no less serious than intentional plagiarism.

If any answer to the questions below is negative, then that area needs to undergo change and revision.

Question	What to pay attention to
Have I cited all borrowed ideas, facts, or arguments?	Ensure all non-original content has a proper reference.
Have I used quotation marks for every direct quote?	Quotation marks must be used even for short excerpts.
Have I cited all paraphrased or summarised material?	Paraphrased ideas still require attribution.
Have I rewritten paraphrased content in my own words and structure?	Avoid keeping the original wording or sentence flow.
Have I applied the same citation style consistently?	Mixing formats (e.g., APA and MLA) causes confusion and errors.
Have I avoided reusing old work without approval?	Self-plagiarism is still a form of academic misconduct.
Have I kept clear notes of all my sources?	Proper source management prevents misattribution.
Have I reviewed my final draft?	Final checks help identify unintentional errors or omissions.

Table 3. Plagiarism self-checklist

3.3. Maintaining Academic Integrity in Practice

Understanding what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid committing it is only one part of the broader picture of academic integrity. As students engage in more advanced and independent research and writing tasks,

they must also develop strategies for detecting unintentional plagiarism, critically evaluating the reliability of their sources, and navigating the ethical complexities of group or collaborative writing projects. These skills are especially important for our context, since final-year EFL students are expected to write with greater independence, take on research-led assignments, and often work in peer- or team-based settings. The ability to apply academic integrity in these practical contexts distinguishes proficient academic writers from those still learning to navigate the conventions.

3.3.1. Plagiarism Detection Tools

Turnitin, Grammarly, and *Scribbr* are all plagiarism detection tools that have become standard in academic environments, used both by teachers, as evaluative tools, and by students, as potential learning aids. It is important to note here that though teachers do use these tools to check the originality of the submitted work, students should not view them as punitive mechanisms, but rather approach them as opportunities to refine their writing and check their adherence to citation standards.

These tools can highlight, for example, accidental and unintentional similarities to source texts, reveal an overreliance on quotations, or flag improper paraphrasing. In addition, reviewing the similarity report encourages students to reflect on their writing choices and how well the sources have been integrated. However, it is also of vital importance that students interpret the results with a critical eye; a high similarity score does not always signal plagiarism, just as a low score does not automatically indicate ethical writing. What matters is the type and context of the matches, not the percentage alone.

To use these tools effectively, students can run their drafts through a checker before submission, revise based on the feedback, and not treat the report as final until they are confident in the originality and integrity of their work.

3.3.2. Evaluating Sources

Citing a source is not just about avoiding plagiarism, it is also about showing that the argument is based on credible, relevant, and up-to-date information. As students become more independent researchers, they need to be very careful and selective about the quality of the sources they include in their writing.

Some key criteria for evaluating sources include *authorship, publication context, recency*, and *objectivity*. Peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, and official reports typically carry more academic weight than do blog

posts, anonymous websites, or opinion pieces. Students should also consider whether the author is an expert in the relevant field, whether the source is backed by evidence, and whether the information is current enough for their research purpose.

Evaluating sources also means avoiding the overuse of a single source and instead drawing from a variety of perspectives. This not only strengthens an argument but also demonstrates independent thought and critical engagement, which are two core principles of academic integrity.

3.3.3. Collaborative Writing and Academic Ethics

Collaborative writing is increasingly common in university coursework, and while these assignments promote teamwork and shared responsibility, they also raise ethical questions about authorship, originality, and contribution.

Academic integrity in collaborative work means being clear about who is responsible for what, avoiding duplication, and ensuring that every group member understands and follows the principles and writing conventions. In practice, this may involve assigning roles early on, keeping version-controlled documents, and reviewing drafts collectively to ensure consistency and originality.

Ethical collaboration requires that all students engage meaningfully, whether by contributing ideas, reviewing structure, or providing language support, and importantly, that no one should submit joint work without the full knowledge and consent of all the contributors.

These potential issues can be overcome with clear expectations, transparent documentation of individual input, and assessment of both the group product and the collaborative process itself.

3.3.3.1. Digital Tools for Collaborative Writing

In academic contexts, writing is often viewed as an individual activity, but many university tasks now require students to write collaboratively. Whether working on group projects, co-authored reports, or peer-reviewed drafts, it is important to know how to navigate the challenges of shared responsibility, consistent style, and ethical contribution.

Effective collaborative writing not only helps to develop academic and communication skills, but also reflects real-world practices, where teamwork and collective authorship are essential. In addition, collaborative writing can offer valuable language exposure, peer support, and opportunities to negotiate meaning. However, it also demands clear coordination, mutual res-

pect, and a commitment to upholding academic integrity throughout the process.

The tools and strategies in the Table below offer practical guidance for managing collaborative writing tasks efficiently and ethically.

Tool	Advantages	Used
Google Docs	Real-time co-authoring, comments, version history, easy sharing	Ideal for joint essays, peer feedback, or group reports
Microsoft Word Online	Familiar interface, tracked changes, integration with *OneDrive*	Useful when students already use *Office 365* or prefer *Word*
Overleaf	Designed for *LaTeX* documents, version control, real-time collaboration	Best for students in linguistics, technical writing, or formatting-heavy papers
Notion	All-in-one workspace, collaborative notes, writing boards	Suitable for planning larger writing projects or research logs
Slack or *Teams*	Organised communication, file sharing, integration with other tools	Useful for coordinating group workflow alongside writing
Miro or *Padlet*	Visual brainstorming boards, drag-and-drop collaboration	Great for idea generation and early-stage planning
Zotero/EndNote shared libraries	Reference management and source sharing	Ensures consistent citation and access to sources in group work

Table 4. Digital tools for collaborative writing

3.3.3.2. Best Practices for Collaborative Writing

The Table below offers some best practices for collaborative writing, as well as how they may be used.

Practice	Purpose	How to use
Assign clear roles	Ensures accountability and a balanced workload	Define tasks early: researcher, writer, editor, citation manager, etc.
Set shared timelines and milestones	Keeps the group organised and on schedule	Use a shared calendar or checklist; agree on internal deadlines before final submission

Practice	Purpose	How to use
Use commenting before editing	Maintains clarity and respect for others' work	Leave comments or suggestions rather than overwriting each other's content directly
Track contributions	Increases transparency and fairness	Use version history or tracked changes; log group input if required
Maintain version control	Prevents confusion and duplication	Work in one shared file; use naming conventions (e.g. Draft_v1, etc.)
Agree on style and tone	Promotes consistency in academic voice	Decide on register, formatting, and citation style in the early drafting stage
Schedule short check-ins	Improves communication and team cohesion	Meet regularly to coordinate tasks and review progress
Support equal participation	Encourages inclusive collaboration and language development	Create space for all voices; assign tasks based on strengths and learning goals

Table 5. Best practices for collaborative writing

4. Feedback in EFL writing

Feedback, or any of its less student-friendly corresponding terms, such as assessment, testing, evaluation, and correction, among others, is a vital segment in any learning process, and learning a foreign language is no different. Like anything else, it has advantages and disadvantages, positive aspects, as well as issues and challenges that need to be addressed and dealt with, as it is an inevitable episode in the learning process that has to do with the observation, description, collection, recording, scoring, and interpretation of information concerning the extent to which the learning outcomes and objectives have been achieved.

The notion of feedback in (EFL) writing refers to the input from reader to writer, with the aim of providing information to the writer for revision. In fact, it is through the feedback stage that the writer discovers where they have not supplied enough information to the reader, thus potentially misleading them; furthermore, where there is illogical organisation, lack of development of ideas, or something like an inappropriate use of a word or a verb tense. It is essential for fostering and consolidating students' writing skills, playing a vital role in their development by guiding them through the writing process to the final product.

If the feedback is to be effective and beneficial, it needs to be constructive, consistent, and fair, with clearly presented, transparent, and objective criteria. In order to achieve this, there are detailed band scores/descriptors, which cover diverse *lower-order concerns* (*LOC*)*,* such as mechanics (layout/format, spelling, punctuation, word count); grammatical competence (grammatical structures, range and accuracy, word order, articles, tenses, subject-verb agreement); vocabulary (or lexis, range of vocabulary, register, appropriate word choice), and *higher-order concerns* (*HOC*)*,* such as discourse management (organisation, argumentation, cohesion, coherence, content, logical development of ideas, academic tone). Taking these areas into consideration will provide a more rounded view of students' writing proficiency, as well as what might need further practice.

Below are several selected techniques commonly used to provide feedback in EFL writing classes.

4.1. Portfolios in EFL Writing Classes

There are different ways with which students' writing proficiency may be illustrated, one of which is the use of the *writing portfolio*. Categorised as a type of formative assessment, which is especially helpful as it is an integral part of the instructional process, the writing portfolio offers a systematic and organised collection of the students' work over a period of time. This is especially beneficial as it involves the students in the selection of its contents, and it includes information about performance criteria, criteria for judging merit, and evidence of self-reflection and/or evaluation.

There are numerous advantages to using portfolios in EFL writing classes, such as that students are more motivated to learn, and that they take responsibility for their own learning since it is a student-oriented approach rather than a teacher-oriented one. Consequently, this encourages active and reflexive learning and promotes learner agency. Furthermore, the use of writing portfolios helps to measure individual progress rather than focusing on the final product, it leads to a noticeable improvement in the students' achievement in that it relieves them of the tension and stress that are present when the issue of feedback comes up, and students acquire a number of valuable life-long skills such as goal-setting, among others.

4.1.1. Students' Views on Portfolios in EFL Writing Classes

At this stage of education, our students are one step away from exiting the academic context and entering the real-life environment, in which they may potentially find themselves in the role of instructors. This is why it is

important that they are aware of the significance and benefits certain techniques and strategies offer, and these opinions they have of writing portfolios indicate that they have come to appreciate all of their advantages.

Below are some views our students have voiced concerning the use of portfolios in their writing classes.

"Being evaluated over a portfolio is much better than writing about only one topic in the midterm or final exam."

"It's good that something in which I put effort is graded as part of our exams. It makes my effort more valuable."

"We might not write so well in an exam, but this doesn't mean that we're not good at writing, so it's a good idea to spread our written work over time and mark it as part of our exams."

"If we were evaluated over only one essay in the exam, I would personally panic and it would be much harder to write in a limited time."

"When I complete my portfolio, I see that I have spent a lot of time and effort to create it. This is much better than being evaluated on only one topic for a final exam."

"If what we write isn't evaluated as a whole, we wouldn't be able to improve our writing skills so much."

4.2. Peer Feedback in EFL Writing Classes

Another useful technique in providing students with feedback in writing classes, and potentially being used as one of the feedback stages that are present in the implementation of feedback for one paper, is known as *peer feedback*. What makes this technique so beneficial is the fact that it can be used as complementary to teacher feedback, it is extremely student-friendly as it removes the anxiety that is inevitable when it comes to receiving feedback in general, it provides a responsive 'real' audience, it helps students become self-critical, and it helps them to develop socio-cognitive skills.

The possible drawbacks might be connected to various time constraints in terms of the number of drafts and/or the length of the written work, certain student characteristics that might cause discomfort, the group size, which might influence the type of feedback, whether it is oral or written, as well as certain preconceived notions especially prevalent amongst more senior teachers concerning who should be providing the feedback. However, the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages, making peer feedback an invaluable part of the writing classes at this stage in our students' studies.

One very important point that should be taken into consideration concerning peer feedback is the fact that in order for it to be fully effective and beneficial to students it needs to be properly introduced and, most im-

portantly, students need to be well-prepared and well-trained to carry it out. The pre-peer feedback preparation includes allowing students to see the great learning experience this activity offers, as well as providing them with clear and precise instructions as to what they are supposed to do, with structured rubrics, and a clear focus. This will ensure that the activity achieves its intended aim and that students give, and receive, concise feedback that is actually helpful, and not vague.

4.2.1. Students' Views on Peer Feedback in EFL Writing Classes

Like with the writing portfolios discussed earlier, we may note that our students are also aware of the advantages of using peer feedback in writing classes, as they have had personal experience with it and have had the opportunity to form their own opinions regarding its functionality and practicality.

Below are some views our students have voiced concerning the use of peer feedback in their writing classes.

"I like it. I find it useful and interesting, because any reader's opinion is relevant."

"Peer feedback motivates me; it encourages me to do better than my colleagues."

"It's great! It allows me to share my opinions with my colleagues. We can exchange and compare ideas."

"I like doing it and getting it because I don't feel pressure when my written work is returned."

"When marking other students' mistakes I become aware of my own."

"I don't think it's very useful because students are not capable of evaluating other students' work."

"I find it awkward to evaluate other students' work because my comments are sometimes not appreciated and taken with hostility."

"I feel uncomfortable commenting on the writing of students who are better than me."

4.2.2. Giving Peer Feedback - Practice Sample

Below is a sample student text of approximately 300-350 words. Read it carefully, thinking about its structure, clarity, argumentation, language use, and academic style, and then provide *constructive feedback* using the *Peer feedback chart* provided.

Step-by-step instructions:

1. Read the text carefully all the way through once without making any comments.

2. On the second reading, think about the structure, clarity, and language.

3. Use the *Peer feedback chart.*

4. Be honest but respectful in your comments; focus on how the writer can improve.

5. Avoid one-word answers; give clear, specific feedback.

6. Give feedback as you would like to receive it: helpful, polite, and specific.

7. Avoid overly harsh language or vague praise.

Essay prompt: Should university education be free for all students?

Instructions: write an argumentative essay (300-350 words) in which you take a clear position on this issue. Support your argument with relevant reasons, examples, and evidence. Consider at least one counterargument and explain why you agree or disagree with it. Use formal academic language and organise your ideas clearly.

Should university education be free for all?

In recent years, the question of whether university education should be free has received growing attention. In many countries, especially in Europe, governments have made higher education more accessible by removing tuition fees. However, in other parts of the world, university remains expensive and is often seen as a privilege rather than a right. The purpose of this essay is to discuss whether university education should be free to all students regardless of their background.

First, making university education free would give equal opportunities to everyone. At the moment, many talented students from low-income families are unable to attend university because they cannot afford the costs. If education were free, more students would be able to get degrees, which would help society because we would have more educated workers. Education is not only a personal benefit but also a public good, so governments should invest in it.

On the other hand, making university free might lower the quality of education. If too many students attend, universities may not have enough funding or space to support them all properly. This could result in large classes, overworked professors, and a decline in academic standards. Some also argue that students value education more when they have to pay for it themselves, which makes them more responsible and motivated.

In addition, someone still has to pay for education, even if students don't. Taxpayers would carry this burden, which could be unfair, especially for those who never attended university. A better solution might be to offer free education only for students who meet academic standards or demonstrate financial need, rather than making it free for everyone.

In conclusion, although free university education could improve access and social equality, it may also bring challenges related to quality and funding. A balanced approach, such as offering targeted support to those who need it most, might be more effective than making education free for all.

Feedback area	Guiding questions	Comments
Content and organisation	- Is the essay clearly structured (introduction, body, conclusion)? - Is the thesis statement clear? - Are arguments and counterarguments logically presented?	
Clarity and style	- Is the language appropriate for academic writing? - Are any sentences vague, too informal, or repetitive? - Do ideas flow logically with clear transitions?	
Grammar and vocabulary	- Are there any grammar issues or awkward phrases? - Is the vocabulary varied and suitably academic? - Are sentence structures appropriately complex?	
Suggestions	- What is one thing the writer does well? - What is one specific thing the writer could improve?	

Table 6. Peer feedback chart

4.3. Teacher Feedback in EFL Writing Classes

Teacher feedback remains one of the most influential forms of feedback in the development of academic writing skills, particularly in an EFL context where students may struggle with both language proficiency and genre conventions. It plays a dual role: correcting linguistic errors and guiding the students towards improved academic discourse.

At its most effective, teacher feedback is formative, timely, and specific. Rather than simply identifying what is wrong, good feedback also explains why something is problematic and how to improve it. It addresses both lower-order concerns (such as grammar, punctuation, and vocabulary), and higher-order concerns (such as organisation, argumentation, coherence, and academic tone).

There are several types of teacher feedback, including: *direct feedback*, where the teacher provides the correct form or explicitly points out the error; *indirect feedback*, where the teacher signals that an error exists (for example, by underlining), prompting self-correction; *focused feedback*, where only certain types of errors are targeted, such as verb tenses or article use; *unfocused feedback*, which addresses a range of error types throughout the text; *end comments*, which provide general impressions or advice at the end of the paper; and *margin comments*, which offer targeted observations on specific sections or paragraphs.

Effective teacher feedback also takes into account the students' proficiency level, writing goals, and the stage in the writing process. When integrated into a process-oriented approach to writing, teacher feedback can support meaningful revision and long-term development rather than merely triggering surface-level corrections. Furthermore, when teachers adopt a conference-based approach, students are more likely to engage with feedback, ask questions, and apply suggestions constructively. The ultimate goal of teacher feedback in EFL academic writing is not just error correction but fostering independence, self-monitoring, and academic literacy.

While teacher feedback is a valuable component of EFL academic writing instruction, it has several limitations, such as *student overdependence*, where students may rely too heavily on the teacher input and fail to develop autonomy in self-editing and critical reflection; *cognitive overload*, which may occur if the feedback is too extensive or unfocused, leading students to concentrate on surface errors while neglecting content and structure; and *vague* or *coded feedback*, which may be misinterpreted, resulting in ineffective revisions or reinforced misconceptions. In addition, a *teacher-centred approach* may emerge if the feedback is overly directive, potentially stifling student voice and creativity. The *time-consuming* nature of providing detailed, individualised feedback also presents challenges, especially in large classes, often resulting in inconsistent or superficial comments, with priority placed on linguistic accuracy over higher-order concerns. Finally, the *emotional impact* of overly critical or impersonal feedback can demotivate the students and cause them anxiety. To be most effective, teacher feedback should be clear, balanced, and integrated with peer and/or other types of feedback, with opportunities for revision.

4.3.1. Students' Views on Teacher Feedback in EFL Writing Classes

Despite the abundance of research that supports the use of varying types of feedback strategies and techniques, students tend to be the most familiar, and sometimes even most comfortable, with that of teacher feedback, for a number of reasons, least of all that it is something that is known to them.

Below are some views our students have voiced concerning the use of teacher feedback in their writing classes.

"The comments were very specific, so I knew exactly what to fix and how to do it."

"I liked that the teacher focused not just on grammar but also on my argument and structure."

"The feedback was too general. I wasn't sure what to change in my writing."

"There were a lot of red marks, but no explanations, so I didn't learn much."

"It felt like the teacher rewrote my essay instead of helping me improve it."

"The focus was only on grammar errors, there was nothing about my ideas or organisation."

"I like it when the teacher checks my writing because I know that the notes and corrections are right."

4.4. Other Types of Feedback in EFL Writing Classes

Effective feedback is crucial for the development of students' academic writing skills, particularly in the EFL context, where students navigate both linguistic challenges and writing conventions. Beyond traditional teacher feedback, as well as peer feedback and writing portfolios, a variety of other feedback types can support students throughout the writing process. Each has distinct benefits, depending on the timing, focus, and level of student engagement. The following section will take a closer look at and provide a brief overview of several other feedback types, ranging from self-reflection and digital tools to personalised conferences and structured rubrics, all of which contribute to a more comprehensive, student-centred approach to academic writing development.

Self-reflection plays a critical role in developing learner autonomy and metacognitive awareness. In this type of feedback, students evaluate their own writing using structured tools such as rubrics, checklists, or reflective prompts. This process encourages them to take ownership of their learning by critically examining the strengths and weaknesses of their work. For example, they may focus on whether each paragraph contributes to the overall thesis, whether the transitions between ideas are logical, or whether the academic

tone has been maintained. Self-reflection fosters independence, helps students internalise academic writing conventions, and supports long-term improvement.

Automated feedback refers to the computer-generated feedback provided by digital tools such as *Grammarly, Write & Improve* (by Cambridge), or *Turnitin's ETS e-rater*. These tools analyse student writing and offer immediate suggestions related to grammar, vocabulary use, cohesion, clarity, and sometimes even coherence. Automated feedback is particularly useful for addressing lower-order concerns such as sentence structure or word choice. While it is not a substitute for human feedback, it does offer timely guidance and can help students identify patterns in their errors. It is best used as a supplementary tool alongside teacher or peer input.

Formative feedback is given throughout the writing process rather than only at the end, and it is a core component of process-based writing instruction. Its main aim is to guide students in improving their drafts through targeted, timely input. Teachers may offer formative feedback on outlines, topic sentences, paragraph structure, argument development, or citation practices. Because it occurs before the final submission, this type of feedback allows students to make meaningful revisions and promotes deeper engagement with the task. It shifts the focus from simple assessment to learning and development.

Summative feedback, on the other hand, is typically provided at the end of the writing process, often accompanied by a final grade or score. It serves to evaluate the students' overall performance on a given assignment and may address areas such as content relevance, structure, style, and language accuracy. While summative feedback does not directly influence revision of the same text, it provides valuable insight into what was done well and what could be improved in future tasks. However, without opportunities for follow-up or reflection, summative feedback alone may have limited impact on students' long-term progress.

Conference feedback involves face-to-face or virtual meetings between the teacher and the students, either individually or in small groups. These conferences create space for personalised feedback where students can ask questions, clarify misunderstandings, and negotiate meaning. The conversational format helps reduce the emotional distance often associated with written corrections and it encourages students to engage actively with the feedback process. Conferences are particularly effective for addressing higher-order issues, such as argument clarity or logic, as well as for supporting students who may struggle to interpret written comments.

Rubric-based feedback is a structured form of feedback based on clearly defined criteria such as content development, organisation, language use,

citation, and style. Rubrics help standardise evaluation and make expectations transparent to students. They allow students to see exactly where they have performed well and where improvement is needed. When accompanied by comments or explanations, rubrics serve as both evaluative and instructive tools, guiding students in revising their work and better understanding academic conventions.

Checklist feedback uses simplified, often tick-box-style lists to check for specific features in their writing. These features may include clarity of thesis statements, paragraph unity, logical progression of ideas, and proper referencing. Checklists promote focused revision and remind students of genre-specific expectations. They are especially useful during self-reflection or peer feedback stages. While this type of feedback is helpful for fostering systematic writing habits, it should complement, not replace, more detailed and personalised forms of feedback such as comments or conferences.

4.5. Sample Checklists and Criteria

To support students in producing clear, coherent, and academically appropriate writing, structured tools such as checklists and rubrics can be highly effective. These tools help focus attention on key aspects of academic writing, from structure and content to language use and referencing. Whether used for self-reflection, peer feedback, or teacher comments, they promote consistency, transparency, and a better understanding of expectations. However, these tools are not one-size-fits-all; they should be adapted to suit the specific task, students' proficiency level, and instructional goals.

The Tables below offer practical frameworks for evaluating writing at both the paragraph and essay level.

Criteria	Yes	Needs work	Comments
The essay has a clear and focused *thesis statement* in the introduction.			
Each paragraph has a clear *topic sentence*.			
Ideas are *logically organised* with clear progression.			
Appropriate *linking devices* (cohesion) are used.			
The writing maintains an *academic tone* and *register*.			

Criteria	Yes	Needs work	Comments
There is *sufficient evidence* or *examples* to support key points.			
All *sources are properly cited* (in-text and reference list).			
The conclusion effectively *summarises* the main points.			
The text has been *proofread* for grammar, spelling, and punctuation.			

Table 7. Sample checklist 1: general academic essay writing

Criteria	Yes	Needs work	Comments
The paragraph has a clear *topic sentence*.			
All sentences in the paragraph *support* the main idea.			
Ideas are presented in a *logical order*.			
Appropriate *transitions* are used within the paragraph.			
There is a clear *concluding sentence*.			
Grammar and vocabulary are *accurate* and *varied*.			

Table 8. Sample checklist 2: paragraph-level writing

Guiding question	My response	What I can improve
What part of my writing am I most satisfied with, and why?		
Which section was the most difficult to write?		
Did I use academic vocabulary and avoid informal expressions?		

Guiding question	My response	What I can improve
Have I followed the assignment instructions and addressed all parts?		
Did I organise my ideas clearly and use appropriate linking devices?		
Have I supported my points with relevant examples or evidence?		
Did I proofread my work for grammar, spelling, and punctuation?		
What one thing will I focus on improving in my next draft or assignment?		

Table 9. Self-reflection prompts

Criteria	Excellent (C2)	Very good (C1)	Needs improvement
Content and ideas	Clear, relevant, well-developed arguments	Mostly clear and relevant, some development needed	Unclear or underdeveloped ideas
Organisation	Excellent flow, effective use of paragraphs	Generally clear structure	Disorganised or confusing
Language use	Wide range of structures and precise vocabulary	Good range, occasional errors	Limited range, frequent errors
Cohesion and coherence	Excellent use of connectors, seamless flow	Generally good cohesion	Weak or mechanical linking
Referencing	Fully accurate and consistent	Minor formatting issues	Inaccurate or missing citations

Table 10. Rubric criteria sample (simplified band descriptors)

5. Digital Literacies in Academic Writing

In today's academic environment, writing is no longer a solitary act. From drafting and revision to sourcing and referencing, digital tools are embedded in every stage of the writing process. The ability to navigate these tools critically and effectively is part of students' academic literacy. This section will take a closer look at how digital platforms can improve individual writing, how to locate and evaluate trustworthy academic sources, and how emerging technologies such as AI are reshaping the future of academic writing.

5.1. Enhancing Academic Writing with Online Tools

There are a number of tools that support individual academic writing, from planning and organising ideas to editing and refining texts. Platforms like *Grammarly, Hemingway Editor,* or AI-based writing assistants can help students detect errors, improve sentence clarity, and revise for tone or cohesion. Citation managers such as *Zotero* or *Mendeley* help streamline referencing, while tools like *Google Docs*, *Word*'s review mode, or AI assistants such as *Copilot* help with personal drafting and revision.

The emphasis is not on replacing the writer, but on empowering the writer to produce clearer, more polished, and academically sound work, and students are encouraged to use these tools strategically, to support their learning, not to bypass it.

The Table below presents selected online tools that may be used to improve students' academic writing, with their purpose, relevant examples, and a brief overview of how they help.

Tool type	Purpose	Examples	How they help
Grammar and style checkers	Detect grammar, punctuation, and stylistic issues	*Grammarly, Hemingway Editor, ProWritingAid*	Improve accuracy, sentence clarity, and tone; raise awareness of common errors
Paraphrasing and rewriting assistants	Offer reformulations and help with sentence variety	*Quillbot, Wordtune*	Support sentence restructuring; help students explore lexical and syntactic alternatives
Outlining and planning tools	Help organise ideas before drafting	*MindMup, Scrivener, Notion*	Aid in brainstorming, structuring essays, and avoiding disorganised arguments

Tool type	Purpose	Examples	How they help
Citation managers	Store, organise, and generate citations and bibliographies	*Zotero, Mendeley, EndNote*	Ensure consistency and save time when managing multiple sources
Revision support tools	Highlight readability, cohesion, and sentence flow	*Hemingway Editor, Grammarly* (*Premium*)	Offer sentence-level feedback and help refine overall coherence

Table 11. Online tools

Digital writing tools are most effective when used intentionally, reflectively, and in line with academic values. Rather than producing perfect writing, they help students make better-informed decisions, strengthen clarity, and focus more attention on the content and structure of their argument. In the EFL context, these tools are especially useful to the students as they help identify language patterns, expand their vocabulary range, and reinforce formal writing conventions, all of which contribute to them becoming more confident, capable academic writers.

5.2. Finding Resources for Academic Writing

Effective academic writing depends not only on how ideas are expressed, but also on the quality of the information used to support those ideas. In a digital age where information is abundant but uneven in quality, the ability to find, evaluate, and select appropriate academic sources is a core skill, which highlights the importance of developing digital research literacy, with an emphasis on critical thinking, credibility, and academic rigour.

The Table below presents selected resources that offer students relevant, high-quality information to help them expand and develop their ideas.

Source type	Examples	Purpose and advantages	Considerations
Peer-reviewed journals	*JSTOR, ScienceDirect, Taylor & Francis, SAGE Journals*	Reliable, reviewed by experts, contain original research	Often require university access; often behind a paywall; may include discipline-specific terminology
Academic books and book chapters	*Google Books*, university library catalogues, *ResearchGate, Google Scholar*	Provide depth and broader theoretical context; free access to papers because the authors themselves have uploaded them	Ensure the source is scholarly (not a popular book or a general-interest publication)

Source type	Examples	Purpose and advantages	Considerations
Conference proceedings	Association websites, institutional repositories	Present emerging research; up-to-date discussions	May not always be peer-reviewed; check credibility
Theses and dissertations	*ProQuest*, institutional repositories, *Open Access Theses and Dissertations* (*OATD*)	Useful for topic development, structure modelling	Cite with caution; not all are formally published
Government and NGO reports	EU publications, UNESCO, World Bank, national ministries	Authoritative, often include current data and policy	Always check date, source credibility, and political neutrality
Reference works	*Encyclopaedia Britannica, Oxford Reference*, subject-specific encyclo-paedias	Useful for definitions and background information	Not usually citable in academic essays; use only for orientation

Table 12. Resource types

In addition, when evaluating sources for academic writing, students should apply a critical lens to make sure that the materials they use are credible, relevant, and academically appropriate. A useful approach is to consider the "5 Ws": *Who* is the author and are they a recognised expert affiliated with a reputable institution? *What* kind of evidence does the source offer, and is it supported with clear references? *When* was it published, and is the information current enough for the topic in question? *Where* was it published (in a peer-reviewed journal, academic book, or official report)? *Why* was it written, and does the source aim to inform and present a balanced analysis, or does it reflect personal opinion or bias? By applying these criteria, students will be able to distinguish between sources that add academic value and those that may weaken their argument.

Of equal importance is recognising the types of sources that should generally be avoided. Personal blogs, opinion pieces, and unverified websites often lack editorial review and academic accountability. While platforms like *Wikipedia* may be useful for a beginner's introduction to a topic, they are not considered reliable for citation in academic work. Students should also avoid using outdated materials, especially in fields where information evolves rapidly, and they should be cautious of broken links or inaccessible sources. Fi-

nally, reliance on AI-generated summaries without checking the original material can lead to misrepresentation or oversimplification of complex arguments. Being selective and critical about source quality is an essential part of responsible academic writing.

Strong academic writing begins with strong academic reading. Developing the ability to find and evaluate sources allows students to construct arguments that are not only well-expressed but also well-supported. Digital source literacy is crucial for independent critical engagement with the global research community.

5.3. AI and the Future of Writing

As students become more adept at evaluating and using academic sources, they must also consider how emerging technologies, particularly artificial intelligence (AI), are reshaping the research and writing landscape. AI-powered tools are increasingly being used to generate summaries, suggest paraphrases, and even produce extended text. While these technologies can support efficiency and language development, offering a wide range of functions that can support students at various stages of the writing process, they also raise important questions about authorship, originality, and academic responsibility. Understanding how to engage with AI critically and ethically is now part of being a literate and independent academic writer.

Digital tools have become essential companions in the academic writing process, offering support for everything from grammar correction to structural organisation. For individual writers, especially those working in a second language, these tools can improve accuracy, coherence, and fluency. Online platforms such as grammar checkers, paraphrasing tools, and citation managers allow students to revise more efficiently and manage sources more effectively. When used with intention and awareness, these technologies can improve the clarity and rigour of students' writing without compromising their academic voice.

Alongside these tools, the ability to locate and evaluate high-quality sources remains a fundamental part of academic writing. In a landscape saturated with information, not all materials are reliable or appropriate for scholarly work. As such, students must be able to identify credible, peer-reviewed, and up-to-date sources that support their arguments with evidence. Developing this evaluative skill, also known as *digital research literacy*, ensures that their writing is grounded in trustworthy knowledge and meets the standards of academic integrity.

If used responsibly, AI can be a valuable partner in the academic writing process. But ethical use requires transparency, critical judgement, and a

clear understanding of academic expectations. Ultimately, AI should enhance our thinking, not substitute it. As technology continues to evolve, the most important skill will remain the same: the ability to think clearly, argue persuasively, and write with integrity.

6. Warm-Up Exercises And Writing Tasks

6.1. Exercises

EXERCISE 1.

The following are two examples of an email a student is writing to a university professor to ask for an extension on a deadline due to illness. Read the two emails and discuss the differences in *register* and *language*.

Email A

Subject: Request for deadline extension due to illness

Dear Professor Naumoska-Sarakinska,

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to kindly request an extension for the business plan due in your Business English course on Monday, 14 October.

Unfortunately, I have been unwell over the past few days and have been advised by my doctor to rest and avoid any strenuous activity. As a result, I have been unable to complete the assignment on time despite my best efforts.

I would be grateful if you could grant me a short extension of three days, until Thursday, 17 October, to finalise and submit my work. Please let me know if you require any documentation or if there is a formal procedure I should follow.

Thank you very much for your understanding.
Yours sincerely,
Stefan Tanevski
4th-year Financial Management major

Email B

Subject: quick question about the business plan

Hi prof. Biljana,

Hope you're doing well. I just wanted to ask if it would be possible to get a short extension for the business plan that's due on Monday.

I've been kind of sick this week and haven't managed to finish it yet. If I could have until Thursday, I think I'd be able to get it done properly.

Let me know if that's okay, or if I need to send you anything.

Thanks so much!
Stefan

EXERCISE 2.

Below are three sets of two emails each. Read them carefully and then discuss what their function is, as well as the differences in *register* and *language*.

Set 1. **type of email:** _____.

Subject: Concern regarding noise levels in the library

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to express my concern regarding the excessive noise in the second-floor study area of the university library. Over the past two weeks, I have found it increasingly difficult to concentrate due to loud conversations and phone calls in that section.

As a final-year student working on my thesis, I rely on a quiet study environment. I kindly request that measures be taken to remind students of the library's noise policy and to ensure the designated quiet areas remain conducive to study.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours faithfully,

Ana Stefanovska

4th-Year English Major

***

Subject: library's too noisy lately

Hi,

I just wanted to mention that the second floor of the library has been really noisy lately. People are talking really loudly and making phone calls. It's getting hard to focus, especially with deadlines coming up.

Could something be done to keep it quieter in that area?

Thanks,

Ana S.

Set 2. **type of email:** _____.

Subject: Application for English Language Instructor Position

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am writing to apply for the position of English Language Instructor as advertised on your website. I am currently in my final year of studies in English Language and Literature at the Faculty of Philology, Ss Cyril and Methodius University, and am eager to begin my teaching career.

During my studies, I have completed coursework in English grammar, literature, academic writing, and teaching methodology. I also completed a teaching practicum at a local high school, where I gained valuable experience in lesson planning and classroom management.

I am confident that my academic background and passion for teaching make me a suitable candidate for this position. Please find my CV attached for your review.

Thank you for your time and consideration.
Faithfully yours,
Marija Petrovska

***

Subject: job application – English teaching

Hi there,
I saw your ad for the English Lang. teaching job and I'd love to apply. I'm in my last year studying English at UKIM and I really want to start teaching soon.

I've done some classroom teaching already as part of my Methodology classes, and I've studied things like grammar, literature, writing, and how to plan lessons. I'm super excited about helping students improve their English.

I've attached my CV and am looking forward to hearing from you!
Best,
Marija

Set 3. **type of email: _____.**

Subject: Apology for missing group presentation
Dear Professor Markovska,
I would like to sincerely apologise for missing the group presentation in your Translation Studies class on Tuesday, 17 May.

Due to a sudden illness, I was unable to attend and failed to inform you or my group members in time. I understand that this may have caused an inconvenience, and I take full responsibility for my absence.

If possible, I would appreciate any opportunity to make up for the missed work or contribute in another way.

Thank you for your understanding.

Yours sincerely,
Elena Trajkova

***

Subject: sorry I missed the presentation
Hi Professor Markovska,
I'm really sorry I missed the presentation on Tuesday. I wasn't feeling well and didn't manage to let you or my group know in time.
I know this probably caused some problems, and I feel bad about it. If there's anything I can do to make up for it, please let me know.
Thanks for understanding.
Elena

EXERCISE 3.
Below are 10 emails written in connection to the given prompt and instructions. Choose the *best* and the *worst*, considering the response itself (whether the points have been addressed or not), the register of the email, and the grammar/vocabulary used. Discuss your choices, and discuss the other emails as well. In addition, the emails contain various mistakes that you need to identify and correct. Use the checklist at the end to help you evaluate the emails.

Prompt: you are a final-year English major at the Faculty of Philology, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University. You are writing to your professor to request feedback on a draft of your graduation thesis before the final submission deadline.

Instructions: write an email (200-250 words) to your professor asking for feedback on the first draft of your graduation thesis. Use appropriate email structure, tone, and language depending on your relationship with the professor. Be sure to:
   – use a clear subject line,
   – include a proper greeting and closing, and
   – write in a style appropriate for academic communication.

Your email should be:
   – structured in paragraphs,
   – have an appropriate beginning (introduction) and ending,
   – include the following information:
       – a short explanation of the purpose of the email and what feedback is needed,

    — the deadline for the final submission and why feedback is urgent, and

    — a polite request for a meeting or written comments.

__Email A__
Subject: request for feedback on graduation thesis draft
Dear Professor Filipov,

I hope this email finds you well. I am writing to kindly request your feedback on the first draft of my graduation thesis, which I have attached to this message.

As the final submission deadline is on 20 May, I would greatly appreciate any comments or suggestions you may have so I can revise the draft accordingly. If possible, I would also be happy to meet in person to discuss your feedback in more detail.

Thank you very much for your time and support.
Kind regards,
Jovan

__Email B__
Subject: Thesis draft feedback
Hi Professor Filipov,

I'm sending you my thesis draft to ask if you could give me some feedback before the final version is due on 20 May. I'd really appreciate your suggestions, especially on the introduction and conclusion.

Let me know if you'd prefer to meet or just send me your comments by email. Thanks so much for your help!
Best regards,
Aleksandra

__Email C__
Subject: Draft for feedback
Dear Professor,

I hope you are well. I've attached the first draft of my thesis. I'd be grateful if you could take a look and let me know what you think, especially about the structure and argumentation.

Looking forward to your comments.
Sincerely,
Ivan

Email D
Subject: Can you check my draft?
Hi Professor,
Please find attached my thesis draft. Could you please check it? Thanks :)

Email E
Subject: hello :)
Hey,
Just wanted to see if you can have a look at my thesis. I'd love to hear what you think.
Cheers,
Aleks

Email F
Subject: Thesis
Dear Prof.
Attached is my thesis draft. Kindly provide feedback.
Regards,
Sanja

Email G
Subject: Feedback pls
Hello professor,
I have write my thesis and I need you to tell me how it is. I hope you can tell me if it's good or no. You can send me the answer in email or we can meet some time.
Bye,
Tina

Email H
Subject: URGENT!!!
I need your feedback asap. Thesis is due soon. Check it and send comments today please.
Aleksandar

Email I
Subject: request
Dear Professor,
I hope you're well. I'm writing to ask if you could read my thesis and give me your feedback. Thank you in advance.
Best,
Matej

Email J

Subject: request for review: graduation thesis draft

Dear Professor Filipov,

I hope you are doing well. I am reaching out to kindly ask whether you could review the draft of my graduation thesis, which I've attached here.

As the submission deadline is approaching (20 May), I would be grateful for any feedback, particularly on my argumentation and use of sources. If possible, I'd be happy to schedule a short meeting at your convenience.

Thank you again for your time and guidance.

Best regards,

Dijana

Use the checklist below to evaluate the emails A-J above:

Criterion	✔ / ✗	Comment
Is the subject line appropriate?		
Is the tone/register appropriate?		
Does the email explain why the student is writing?		
Is the final submission deadline mentioned?		
Is there a clear, polite request for feedback or a meeting?		
Is the grammar and vocabulary appropriate and accurate?		
Is the email well-structured and clear?		

Table 13. Checklist for email evaluation

6.2. Writing Tasks

Brainstorming techniques: Below are a set of brainstorming-related writing tasks in connection with the brainstorming techniques section (see 2.10.). Choose *one* brainstorming technique from the Table below and carry out the writing task instructions connected to it.

Brainstorming technique	Writing task	Instructions
Freewriting	Exploratory essay	Choose a topic related to your field. Write freely for 10 minutes without editing. Review what you have

Brainstorming technique	Writing task	Instructions
		written and highlight ideas. Use them to write a 300-400 word essay focusing on idea development.
Listing	Compare-and-contrast paragraph	Make two lists for two learning strategies (e.g., note-taking versus summarising). Compare them based on time, usefulness, etc. Write a 150-200 word paragraph based on your comparison.
Clustering/mind mapping	Cause-and-effect essay	Create a mind map on the topic "Social Media and Academic Performance." Identify causes and effects. Use the map to write a 400-500 word essay with clear paragraph divisions and logical flow.
Eliciting	Argumentative essay	Answer *Who, What, Where, Why, How* questions on the topic "Should class attendance be mandatory?" Use the answers to plan and write a 5-paragraph argumentative essay (500-600 words) with a thesis and counterarguments.
Pair/group brainstorming	Discussion paper	In groups, brainstorm problems in online learning. Organise your ideas into categories (e.g., motivation, access). Co-author a 600-700 word paper discussing challenges and suggesting improvements.
Column-based comparison	Analytical report	Create a two-column table comparing *Grammarly* and *Write & Improve* (features, feedback quality, interface). Write a 400-500 word report, ending with a brief recommendation.
Visual prompt	Descriptive or reflective paragraph	Choose an image. Brainstorm related words, feelings, or memories. Write a 150-200 word paragraph describing the image or reflecting on a connected personal experience.
Silent brainstorming	Reflective essay	Brainstorm quietly on the topic "How has your academic writing improved this semester?" After 5-10 minutes, expand on your ideas in a 350-400 word reflective essay with specific examples and strategies.
Bullet-point brainstorming	Problem-solution essay	Make a bullet-point list of problems related to plagiarism and their possible solutions. Use these notes to write a 450-550 word essay outlining the issue and offering realistic, clear solutions.
Timed brainstorming	Argumentative paragraph	Brainstorm for 10 minutes on "Benefits of Multilingualism." Choose your three strongest points and write a 150-200 word paragraph with academic tone and linking devices.

Table 14. Brainstorming-related writing tasks

Writing Task 1 - requesting a letter of recommendation

Aim: to write a polite and professional email requesting a letter of recommendation, using appropriate structure, register, and tone for formal academic communication.

Context: you are applying for a Master's degree program abroad. One of the requirements is an academic reference. You decide to ask a professor who taught you in multiple courses and is familiar with your academic work.

Instructions: write an email to your professor in which you:
– explain what you are applying for and why it suits your interests,
– ask if they would be willing to write a letter of recommendation,
– mention why you are asking them specifically and reference specific achievements or coursework, and
– provide relevant deadlines and offer to send any supporting documents they may need.

Your email should:
– use a clear subject line,
– follow a formal register and tone,
– include a suitable greeting and sign-off, and
– be between 200-250 words.

Use the checklist below to evaluate your email for the following criteria:

Criterion	✔ / ✘	Comment
Structure (subject, greeting, body, closing)		
Politeness and appropriateness of register		
Completion of all task points		
Grammar and vocabulary accuracy		
Clarity, conciseness, fluency, and coherence		

Table 15. Checklist for email (self-) evaluation

Writing Task 2 - rescheduling a missed appointment

Aim: to write a clear, polite email apologising for a missed academic appointment and requesting to reschedule, using appropriate register, tone, and structure.

Context: you had arranged a meeting with your thesis supervisor to discuss your work. However, you missed the appointment because of an unexpected personal matter (e.g., illness, transport issue, family emergency). You are writing to apologise and ask to reschedule.

Instructions: write an email to your professor in which you:
— apologise for missing the scheduled meeting and briefly explain the reason,
— acknowledge any inconvenience caused,
— express strong interest in rescheduling and propose a few alternative times, and
— reaffirm your commitment to the thesis work.

Your email should:
— be polite, formal, and respectful,
— include a clear subject line, greeting, and closing, and
— be between 200-250 words.

Use the checklist below to evaluate your email for the following criteria:

Criterion	✔ / ✘	Comment
Structure (subject, greeting, body, closing)		
Politeness and appropriateness of register		
Completion of all task points		
Grammar and vocabulary accuracy		
Clarity, conciseness, fluency, and coherence		

Table 16. Checklist for email (self-) evaluation

Writing Task 3 - inquiring about an internship opportunity

Aim: to write a professional inquiry email about a job or internship opportunity, showing interest and requesting further information using formal but engaging language.

Context: you saw an announcement for an English-language internship at a local publishing company that works with academic materials. You want to find out more about the internship (duration, tasks, whether it is paid, etc.) before applying.

Instructions: write an email to the internship coordinator in which you:
— introduce yourself and explain how you found out about the internship,
— express your interest in the position and briefly mention your qualifications/relate it to your skills or goals,
— ask for clarification on specific aspects (e.g., responsibilities, duration, paid/unpaid, application process), and
— offer to send additional documents (CV, portfolio) if needed.

Your email should:
— have a professional subject line,
— use a polite and semi-formal tone, and
— be between 200-250 words.

Use the checklist below to evaluate your email for the following criteria:

Criterion	✔ / ✗	Comment
Structure (subject, greeting, body, closing)		
Politeness and appropriateness of register		
Completion of all task points		
Grammar and vocabulary accuracy		
Clarity, conciseness, fluency, and coherence		

Table 17. Checklist for email (self-) evaluation

Part II

Applied Writing for Real-World Contexts: Academic and Professional Communication

7. Writing CVs And Résumés

As students prepare to transition from university into the world of work or further academic study, the ability to present themselves effectively in writing becomes essential. Two of the most widely used documents for this purpose are the *Curriculum Vitae* (*CV*) and the *résumé*. While they serve similar functions, providing a summary of qualifications, skills, and experiences, they differ in format, focus, and purpose depending on the context.

In this section we will take a closer look at both documents in detail, examine their structure, content, and style, as well as look at some practical activities and tasks which will help students create strong, well-targeted CVs and résumés suitable for academic, professional, or international contexts.

7.1. What is a CV?

CV is an abbreviation for *Curriculum Vitae*, which is Latin for *course of life*. It is a detailed and comprehensive document that describes the course of one's academic and professional accomplishments. While there is usually no length requirement on a CV, most range from three to ten pages, though some might be even longer. The general rule of thumb is that the more experience, the longer the CV.

Typically, a CV provides information concerning the candidate's career history, education, awards, special honours, grants or scholarships, research or academic projects, and publications. Additional information that might be found in a CV may be in terms of professional references, coursework, fieldwork, descriptions of dissertations, and a personal profile that lists relevant skills and attributes.

7.2. What is a Résumé?

Oftentimes there is confusion between the terms CV and résumé, and the question that arises is whether they are, in fact, one and the same. In all of Europe, the word CV is essentially just a synonym for résumé. Thus, when applying for a position in the EU, and in Europe in general, and the job asks for a CV, it actually means a résumé. The differences between a CV and a résumé generally only apply in the United States, as in the EU, in Europe, *both terms, CV and résumé, mean the same thing*, though there are certainly differences between them.

7.3. Differences between a CV and a Résumé

Among the key differences between a CV and a résumé are the document's *length,* its *contents,* and its *purpose.*

Depending on where in the world the candidate is applying, as well as their career path, may determine what is more appropriate – a CV or a résumé. If the employer is in the United States, it would be better to submit a résumé, unless the position is in the academic, medical, or scientific fields. On the other hand, if the position is located outside the US, a CV may be the better option.

In the United States, a *résumé* is a concise, carefully chosen and thoughtfully organised collection of professional experiences, skills and qualifications that are strictly relevant to the job being applied for. A CV, on the other hand, is more comprehensive, presenting an in-depth history of professional and academic credentials and accomplishments.

In terms of *length,* as the CV presents a full history of the candidate's academic credentials, the length of the document is variable. In contrast, a résumé presents a concise picture of the candidate's skills and qualifications for a specific position, so its length tends to be shorter and dictated by years of experience (generally 1-2 pages).

In terms of *function,* a CV is mainly used for academic purposes, such as applying for a research programme, a PhD, or a university teaching post, whereas a résumé is typically prepared for non-academic positions in the private or corporate sector.

And, lastly, concerning its *purpose,* i.e., the *type of information included*, a CV can be seen as an academic diary that includes all of the candidate's academic qualifications, achievements, and certifications; it is universal in nature as it can be updated as necessary. A résumé, however, has to be tailored for each job being applied for, and has a greater emphasis on professional achievements over academic ones.

The differences between a CV and a résumé are presented in the Table below.

Aspect	CV (Curriculum Vitae)	Résumé
Length	Can be longer (multiple pages)	One page (maximum two)
Purpose	Used for academic/research/teaching positions, fellowships, or grants	Used for job applications in most industries
Content	Comprehensive overview: includes education and academic background, teaching/research experience, publications, presentations, awards, honours, affiliations, voluntary and honorary positions	Tailored summary: focuses on relevant work experience and skills only
Structure	Follows a systematic and consistent format	Customised for each job application

Aspect	CV (Curriculum Vitae)	Résumé
Focus	Includes all relevant professional experience, including unpaid, voluntary, or honorary roles	Includes only what is strictly relevant to the job applied for
Geographical use	Common in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia; used for academic/scientific positions in the US	Standard in the US and Canada (except for academic/research roles)
Use in the US	For academic/scientific/education roles, fellowships, or grants	For most other job applications
Style	Detailed, often chronological, listing all qualifications and experiences	Concise, selective, and achievement-focused

Table 18. Differences between a CV and a résumé

7.4. Types of CVs

CVs can be of varying types, depending on what they are needed for. As such, we may mention the four main types: *chronological* (or *performance*), *functional* (or *skills-based*), *combination* (or *hybrid*), and *academic*, each suited to different purposes and professional contexts.

Chronological CV

A *chronological CV* is also known as a *performance CV* and it is the most common format, preferred by employers. In a chronological style CV, work history and education entries are sorted by date in order of most recent first, i.e., reverse chronological order. This type of a CV contains details of education and qualifications, together with interests. Some chronological CVs also contain a brief personal statement at the front, which sets out the key skills and strengths of the candidate. Most employers tend to favour this format since it makes things easier for them; they simply want to get a feel for the candidates' career to date.

This type of a CV would be best used when applying within the same industry as it demonstrates career progression, growth and maturity throughout an organisation, and a stable, solid career evolution through one or, at most, two fields; if there are not many achievements in the candidate's career, it simply provides a job-by-job layout.

Functional CV

A *functional CV,* also known as a *skills-based CV,* places the emphasis on the candidate's skills and expertise rather than the chronology of their employment to date. It is used in situations where specific skills and accomplish-

ments gained through experience or academic qualifications will demonstrate the candidate's competencies, with skills listed in order of their importance. It is especially suitable for entry-level candidates, students entering the job market for the first time, or recent graduates with little work experience who want to emphasise their transferable skills. It is also ideal for those who are looking for a career change.

This type of a CV would be best used if the candidate has changed jobs frequently, if their experience comes through unrelated jobs, or if they have several career gaps; if they are changing industry; or if the candidate is a more mature applicant, as this type of CV takes the focus off their age.

Combination CV

A *combination CV*, also known as a *hybrid CV*, follows the format of both the chronological and the functional type CV, which makes it slightly longer than normal. It is useful for candidates wanting to change careers that have some relevant skills for the new field. It can also be useful when the candidate wants to demonstrate more skills than the work experience section allows for or would not bring out adequately.

This type of a CV would be best used by candidates that have a strong career progression with many achievements; candidates that want to showcase their strengths as well as their experience; as well as senior level applicants that have a lot of working experience and achievements to demonstrate.

Academic CV

As the name implies, an *academic CV* would be found in an academic context, and it is most commonly used in postgraduate applications, placing an emphasis on the subjects studied, projects undertaken, details of research expertise, and a list of all publications. CVs for academia should include research and teaching experience, publications, grants and fellowships, professional associations and licenses, awards and other information relevant to the position being applied for. It is important to tailor the CV so that the content reflects the audience, i.e., the specific institution being applied to.

7.5. CV Content

In terms of the content that should be included in a document of this type, we may note the following standard sections:

1. *Personal details:* name, address, date of birth, telephone number, and email.

2. *Personal profile/personal statement:* a short statement at the beginning of the CV to 'sell' yourself, to show your skills, experience, and personal

qualities. This means that the candidate should include active words such as "developed", "accomplished", and "resolved"; and tailor the statement to the requirements of the job being applied for.

3. *Education and qualifications:* if this is the candidate's strongest selling point, then it should appear right after the *personal statement,* something which is especially true for recent graduates. In this context, other important notes worth mentioning are the following:

– if the *work experience* section is stronger than the *education* section (especially for senior level candidates), then the *education* section should follow the *employment histor*y, where the focus is on career achievements and experience;

– qualifications should be listed in order of the *most recent* and *most relevant* first: the name of the University should be provided, as well as its location; the degree obtained should be listed, as well as the dissertation title;

– grades should be mentioned if good, and not mentioned if poor;

– more details should be given to the higher qualifications listed, such as degrees and masters;

– with a PhD, the full title should be provided; also information on relevant modules, dissertations or projects connected to the job;

– only the most relevant information should be included;

– if the candidate has not yet graduated, *degree expected* should be written.

4. *Work experience/employment history*: only relevant jobs should be provided, either in terms of skills, knowledge, or experience. In addition:

– the most recent work history should be stated, and then worked backwards chronologically, listing the name of the employer, the company's location, job title, the dates of employment there, as well as the responsibilities held and the achievements accomplished;

– gaps in the employment history, if any, should be explained;

– months or years spent without a job, if any, should be explained clearly on the CV, but without going into great personal details (e.g., doing voluntary work, raising a family, health reasons, etc.);

– reasons for leaving a previous job should not be included;

– the focus ought to be on achievements and responsibilities;

– details that illustrate exactly how they have given the candidate the skills which will be useful should be provided;

- voluntary or work placement activities should be included; the quality of the experience is more important than whether or not it was paid;
- action verbs should be used.

5. *Hobbies and interests*: if they highlight responsibilities and skills that are relevant to the position being applied for. Other important points in this section include the following:

- the selection to be included should be chosen wisely as these provide a fuller and more complete picture of the candidate's personality;
- this section should be short and to the point;
- a range of interests may be noted, anything showing evidence of transferable skills such as team working, organising, planning, persuading, negotiating, etc.
- political or religious affiliations should not be mentioned.

6. *Skills*: if they highlight the responsibilities that are relevant to the position being applied for, such as:

- languages (the mother tongue first, if necessary): spoken and written level (usually: elementary, intermediate or advanced, or in accordance with the CEFR), with a distinction made in terms of reading, writing, or speaking, e.g., good/conversational/fluent in French, basic Spanish;
- computing knowledge: programming languages known or software used; level of knowledge, such as good working knowledge of *Excel*, plus basic web page design skills.

7. *Professional training and/or development:* again, in connection to their relevance in terms of the position being applied for, thus:

- noting specific courses relevant to the job in hand that have either been already obtained or are being studied for at the moment;
- qualifications and training from previous relevant jobs, including the period during which they were attended, or the number of total hours attended.

8. *References:* with an emphasis on the following:

- names and contact details of referees should not be included on the CV, simply a statement of *References are available on request*, as employers tend to ask for details if and when they are ready to offer a position;

— when asked for references, usually *two* referees are sufficient: one academic (perhaps a tutor or a project supervisor) and one from an employer.

7.6. What Makes a Good CV?

What makes a good CV is not something that can easily be defined, yet there are some points that would make one CV stand out from the others, such as the points provided in the Table below, connected to content and presentation.

Aspect / Guideline	Recommendation / Explanation
Be honest	CVs are not legal documents, but dishonesty can result in rejection if discovered.
Match qualifications, experience, and skills	The CV should be aligned with the job requirements and should demonstrate how they would be met.
Be specific	All claims should be supported with clear, concrete examples and details.
Spelling	Check thoroughly to ensure accuracy.
Language	Use simple, clear words; avoid unnecessarily complex vocabulary.
Sentence style	Keep sentences short and begin with action verbs.
Layout	Careful, clear; not cramped or overly spaced.
Formatting	Bold and italic for headings and key details.
Margins	Justified margins for clean alignment.
Spacing	Consistent spacing between sections and headings.
Page layout	Each page should be a separate sheet.
Footer	Include your name in the footer on every page.
Paper quality	Use plain white A4 paper of good quality.
Font size	Use a legible font, ideally size 11 or 12.
File format	Save and submit the CV in PDF format to preserve layout, fonts, and spacing across devices.

Table 19. Content and presentation guidelines for creating an effective CV

Along with the things that a CV needs to contain, there are also things that need to be avoided, such as the points noted in the Table below, with a brief explanation why.

Should be avoided	Reason
Any negatives or critical remarks	Maintains a positive and professional tone.
Poor grades or unfortunate work experiences	Focus should be on strengths and relevant accomplishments.
References (unless specifically requested)	Can be provided later upon request.
A photograph (unless specifically requested)	Often irrelevant and may lead to unconscious bias.
Health details or disabilities	Not required and may lead to unintentional discrimination.
Political affiliations	Irrelevant to most roles and may cause bias.
Personal details like weight, height, marital status, or children	Not relevant and may breach anti-discrimination policies.
Humour	May be perceived as unprofessional or inappropriate.
Current or expected salary (unless requested)	Salary discussions typically happen during or after the interview process.
Reason for leaving last job	Can be discussed during the interview if necessary.
Graphics or images	Distracting and often unnecessary.
Abbreviations	May confuse or distract the reader if not universally understood.
Jargon or colloquial language	Reduces clarity and may appear unprofessional.
The words "CV" or "Curriculum Vitae" as the title	Full name should be used instead; it is clear and direct, and the reader will immediately know whose CV it is.

Table 20. What not to include in a CV

Some common mistakes may appear in a CV and leave a negative impression, so care ought to be taken that they, too, are avoided, as presented in the Table below, with a brief explanation why.

Mistake	Reason
Misspelling the company name or address	Shows lack of attention to detail and carelessness.

Mistake	Reason
Not including a reply address	Makes it difficult for employers to contact you.
Trying to be funny	Risky and often perceived as unprofessional.
Spelling mistakes or poor language use (poor word choice, misuse, etc.)	Undermines credibility and gives the impression of sloppiness.
Repeating the same verb for work experiences	Suggests limited language skills and weak ability to express diverse competencies.
Leaving out dates	May raise suspicion and create a lack of trust.
Using an unprofessional email address (e.g., spiderman1998@example.com)	Makes the candidate appear immature or unserious; a professional variation of one's name should always be used.

Table 21. Common CV mistakes

7.7. Sample CVs

Below are sample CVs – chronological, functional, combination, and academic.

Chronological CV

Best for candidates with a consistent and progressive employment history.

Maria Lopez
maria.lopez@email.com
 +44 7555 123 456
London, United Kingdom

Personal Statement
Results-oriented marketing professional with over 6 years of experience in digital strategy, branding, and campaign management. Proven leadership in multi-channel marketing and client growth.

Employment History

Marketing Manager
BrightEdge Media, London | Jan 2020 – Present
– Led team of 6 to deliver campaigns across SEO, PPC, and email marketing.
– Increased lead generation by 40% year-on-year.

- Implemented new CRM system improving retention by 25.

Digital Marketing Executive
BlueDot Agency, Manchester | Aug 2016 – Dec 2019
- Coordinated social media strategy, doubling follower engagement.
- Delivered monthly analytics reports to senior stakeholders.

Education
BA in Business and Marketing
University of Leeds | 2012 – 2016

Skills
- SEO/SEM Tools
- Adobe Creative Suite
- Project Management

Languages
- English (native)
- Spanish (fluent)

<u>**Functional CV**</u>

Ideal for career changers, recent graduates, or those with gaps in employment.

Jonathan Kim
jonathan.kim@email.com
+1 917 555 7890
New York, USA

Profile
Versatile professional with experience in events, logistics, and customer service. Excellent communication and organisational skills, with a record of delivering high-impact results.

Core Skills and Achievements

Customer Relations
- Managed customer queries in fast-paced retail environments.
- Consistently achieved 95%+ customer satisfaction feedback.

Project Coordination
- Oversaw logistics for 20+ corporate events, each with 200+ attendees.

– Coordinated supplier and venue communications across multiple time zones.

Communication
– Delivered staff training workshops for a volunteer-based NGO.
– Multilingual, with experience working in diverse cultural settings.

Work History Summary
– Freelance Event Coordinator | 2022 – Present
– Customer Support Agent, Optima Telecom | 2019 – 2021
– Operations Assistant, Urban Movers | 2017 – 2019

Education
– BA in Communication Studies
– University of Toronto | 2012 – 2016

Combination CV

Effective for candidates who want to highlight both skills and job history.

Amira Hassan
amira.hassan@email.com
+61 400 123 987
Sydney, Australia

Professional Summary
HR professional with 8+ years of experience in recruitment, policy design, and team training. Known for strong interpersonal skills, discretion, and process improvement.

Key Competencies
– Recruitment and Selection
– Employee Engagement
– HR Policy Compliance
– HR Software (Workday, BambooHR)
– Languages: English, Arabic

Employment History

HR Advisor
– Evergreen Health Group, Sydney | Feb 2019 – Present
– Designed onboarding programme reducing new hire turnover by 30%.
– Updated employee handbook to ensure legal compliance.

Talent Acquisition Coordinator
– SkyBridge IT, Melbourne | Apr 2015 – Jan 2019
– Conducted candidate screenings and scheduled interviews for 100+ vacancies annually.
– Improved time-to-hire by 20% with streamlined processes.

Education
– MA in Human Resource Management University of Sydney | 2016 – 2018
– BA in Psychology University of Melbourne | 2011 – 2014

Academic CV

Used for academic, research, or teaching positions in higher education.

Dr Sophie Deveaux
sophie.deveaux@email.com
+33 6 00 11 22 33
Paris, France

Research Interests
Postcolonial literature, cultural identity in transnational writing, feminist theory, and contemporary francophone fiction.

Education
– PhD in Comparative Literature University of Amsterdam | 2016 – 2021
– MA in Literary Studies University of Paris-Sorbonne | 2013 – 2015
– BA in French and English Literature University of Lyon | 2010 – 2013

Publications
– "Voices of the Border: Migration and Resistance," *Journal of Modern Literature*, 2023
– "Feminism in Francophone West Africa," *Women in Literature Quarterly*, 2021

Conferences
– "Gender and Displacement in Contemporary Fiction," Columbia LitCon, 2023
– "The New Francophonie," European Literary Forum, 2022

Teaching Experience
– Lecturer in Literature, University of Geneva | 2022 – Present

   – Graduate Teaching Assistant, University of Amsterdam | 2018 – 2021

Awards and Grants
– Erasmus+ Research Fellowship, University of Helsinki (2020)
– French National Research Grant for Doctoral Studies (2017)

7.8. Exercises

EXERCISE 4.

Use the headings to complete the CV.

Languages / Address / Email / Education / Date of birth / Work experience / Mobile /Skills and interests

CV – Martin Moore

1 _____	:	26 August 1997
2 _____	:	94 Albion Street, Birmingham, B23 2TF
3 _____	:	Moor0@myworld.com
4 _____	:	0778 445 288
5 _____	:	7 GCSEs including English, Maths and Science
6 _____	:	Cashier at a large supermarket
7 _____	:	French – A2, German – A2
8 _____	:	Mountain biking, drawing and computer programming

EXERCISE 5.

Decide on the correct answers to the following questions and explain your choices.

1. Which of the five main sections in the CV/ résumé can you choose not to include?

    a) contact and essential information
    b) profile
    c) work experience
    d) education and training
    e) interests

2. Why are the different sections on the CV/résumé in the order they are?

    a) potential employers are used to this section order
    b) it looks good

3. Why are the section titles in the middle of the page and why is a large font used?
>   a) to make it look pretty
>   b) to help people quickly find the information they are looking for

4. Why do some of the sentences on the CV/résumé have bullet points in front of them?
>   a) to separate different sentences
>   b) to highlight important abilities, experiences, and achievements

5. What is the main purpose of the profile section on a CV/résumé?
>   a) to self-promote yourself
>   b) to summarise the most important information
>   c) to say things you do not say on the rest of the CV

6. What style of vocabulary should be used on a CV/résumé?
>   a) informal
>   b) formal
>   c) it doesn't matter

7. Why do some jobs in the work experience section have a list of 'Responsibilities and Achievements', while others do not?
>   a) these jobs are more relevant for the job being applied to than the others
>   b) the person did more things in these jobs than the others

8. Which sentence in the 'Responsibilities and Achievements' part of the 'Senior International Sales Executive job at Telefonica' should not be used by a candidate applying for a sales position?
>   a) implemented a new lead generating process
>   b) fire warden for the floor of the office
>   c) member of the sales strategy committee

9. Which sentence in the 'Responsibilities and Achievements' for the 'Senior International Sales Executive job at Almagro Construction' is written incorrectly?
>   a) created a training program for all new sales staff in the division
>   b) co-created a sales team application
>   c) I was a member of the division's marketing strategy group

10. What is the most important factor in deciding what information to include on a CV/résumé?
>   a) it sounds professional
>   b) it is relevant for the job being applied for
>   c) it makes you seem very important

<u>EXERCISE 6.</u>

Below are a number of verbs and phrases in *italics* that are commonly used in *business English* to make sentences sound more professional. From the context, try to guess what the meaning of the words/phrases in *italics* are.

a) Although I wasn't directly involved, in order to make sure that nothing went wrong, I *oversaw* the changes in the process.

b) For three years I *ran* the French sales team. I enjoyed the responsibility of being in charge of the team.

c) Although I wasn't the Project Manager, I was very important and I *played a key role* in the project's success.

d) Because of the size of the project, the English and Spanish offices had *to collaborate* in order to finish on schedule.

e) For about five years both Jeff Green and I *co-managed* the development department. But it was frustrating having two people make the final decisions.

f) When you're designing or creating something new, I believe it's fundamental to have different opinions. So, it was good on this project that both Bob Rae and I *co-developed* it.

g) It's important *to coordinate* everything in a supermarket. You need to make sure that the staff know what they are doing and that there is always bread and milk, etc., available.

h) I *came up with* the idea of selling mobile phones on the internet when I was in the bath. I always have my best ideas there.

i) Because it was a very complex business process, it took a long time *to set up*. If I remember, nearly three years from start to finish.

j) The easiest part was the last part of the project. We *implemented* the business process in less than six weeks.

<u>EXERCISE 7.</u>

Carefully read the CV below and identify at least 10 mistakes related to inappropriate content, language issues, structure, and formatting. Rewrite a correct version of the CV in a clear, formal, and appropriate style, using an appropriate format of your choice. Use academic writing conventions as if applying for a graduate role, internship, or academic research assistant position.

CV

Name: Jacky the Great
Email: partyanimal89@hotmail.com
Phone: 070123456
Address: Somewhere near the city

Profile:
Hey! I'm a super enthusiastic guy who loves working with people and having a good laugh. I haven't worked in academia before but I'm a fast learner and I read a lot. I'm looking for a job that pays well and let's me travel the world!

Education:
2017-2020: BA stuff at a uni in Germany. Didn't finish my MA because the professors had it in for me.

Experience:
– Did some volunteering at a school, it was cool (2019)
– Worked at Starbucks for a while, not much to say about that tbh (2020-2021)
– Taught English to kids online. I didn't really like it but I did it anyway (2022)

Skills:
– Great with people
– Can use Word and email
– Pretty organised when I want to be
– Like to get things done (eventually)

Languages:
– English – perfect
– German – kind of ok
– French – lol, not really

Hobbies:
– Partying
– Meme-making
– Netflix binging

References available if you really need them.

7.9. Writing Tasks

Writing Task 4 – write a formal, well-structured CV (chronological, functional, combination, or academic), 1-2 pages in length, tailored to an academic or professional opportunity. Use formal, concise academic English, avoid contractions and slang, do not include irrelevant personal information, and maintain clear formatting and consistent spacing throughout.

Choose a context: postgraduate programme; research or teaching assistant role; internship or graduate job; Erasmus+ or international placement.

Required sections:
— Name and Contact Details
— Personal Statement
— Education
— Work or Volunteer Experience
— Key Skills
— Languages
— References (optional)

Optional extension: add a short cover letter (100-150 words) explaining your motivation and suitability for the position or opportunity.

Peer feedback task:

Exchange your CV with a peer and then follow the steps below:

1. Read your peer's CV twice, once to form an overall impression and a second time to examine the details.
2. Complete the CV Writing Assessment Rubric (below) for your peer, assigning a score of 1, 3 or 5 to each criterion.
3. For each score awarded, write one or two sentences explaining your reasoning, citing specific examples from the CV.
4. Identify two or three aspects that were done well.
5. Suggest two or three concrete changes that could improve the CV.
6. Use polite, constructive language and avoid vague comments.

Useful language for peer feedback:

— *One strength of your CV is...*
— *This section is clear and well organised.*
— *Consider improving the section on...*
— *You could clarify this sentence by...*
— *The tone could be made more formal by...*
— *Try replacing "X" with a more specific action verb like...*

   – *This part is effective because...*
   – *Check for consistency in...*

CV Writing Assessment Rubric with Scoring and Comments

Criteria	Score (1/3/5)	Comments
Content and structure Are all required sections present? Is the CV well-organised and tailored to the context?		
Language and style Is the language formal, clear, and concise? Are informal expressions avoided?		
Grammar and mechanics Are there spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors?		
Format and presentation Is the layout professional? Is formatting consistent (spacing, font, alignment)?		
Relevance and accuracy Is the content relevant to the opportunity? Are education and experience clearly connected to the goal?		

Table 22. CV Writing Assessment Rubric

   Writing Task 5 - write a formal, well-structured CV, 1-2 pages in length, in response to the job advertisement below. Assume you are applying for the role of fitness instructor, (entry-level or recently qualified). Use formal, concise academic English, avoid contractions and slang, do not include irrelevant personal information, and maintain clear formatting and consistent spacing throughout.

   Are you passionate about fitness and helping others achieve their health and wellness goals? If so, a career as a fitness instructor may be the perfect fit for you! Our Body & Mind Wellness Centre is looking to hire! Our fitness instructors plan and instruct fitness sessions and classes, as well as teach one-on-one or in group settings. Our fitness instructors provide high quality exercise plans to clients seeking to improve their level of fitness. They assist clients in performing exercises by suggesting changes or useful techniques to maximise efficiency and

minimise risk of injury, monitor the progress of their clients and adapt program-mes based on the needs of the client. They also offer their clients helpful advice regarding nutrition, lifestyle changes, and weight control. Our fitness instructors are adept in First Aid practices. We offer the option to teach independently, work remotely, teach in schools, fitness centres, private practices, or rehabilitation centres. Our ideal candidates are experienced in instructing different types of exercise, and have had some form of formal instructor training. Please submit your CV to: bodyandmindwellnesscenter@gmail.com

Required sections:
– Name and Contact Details
– Personal Statement
– Education
– Work or Volunteer Experience
– Key Skills
– Languages
– References (optional)

Optional extension: add a short cover letter (100-150 words) explaining your motivation and suitability for the position or opportunity.

Peer feedback task:

Exchange your CV with a peer and then follow the steps below:

1. Read your peer's CV twice, once to form an overall impression and a second time to examine the details.

2. Complete the CV Writing Assessment Rubric (below) for your peer, assigning a score of 1, 3 or 5 to each criterion.

3. For each score awarded, write one or two sentences explaining your reasoning, citing specific examples from the CV.

4. Identify two or three aspects that were done well.

5. Suggest two or three concrete changes that could improve the CV.

6. Use polite, constructive language and avoid vague comments.

Useful language for peer feedback:
– *One strength of your CV is...*
– *This section is clear and well organised.*
– *Consider improving the section on...*
– *You could clarify this sentence by...*
– *The tone could be made more formal by...*
– *Try replacing "X" with a more specific action verb like...*
– *This part is effective because...*
– *Check for consistency in...*

CV Writing Assessment Rubric
with Scoring and Comments

Criteria	Score (1/3/5)	Comments
Content and structure Are all required sections present? Is the CV well-organised and tailored to the context?		
Language and style Is the language formal, clear, and concise? Are informal expressions avoided?		
Grammar and mechanics Are there spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors?		
Format and presentation Is the layout professional? Is formatting consistent (spacing, font, alignment)?		
Relevance and accuracy Is the content relevant to the opportunity? Are education and experience clearly connected to the goal?		

Table 23. CV Writing Assessment Rubric

8. Writing Letters of Motivation and Cover Letters

A *letter of motivation*, as well as a *cover letter*, may be included together with a CV (or résumé) in the application process, so it is especially important that they are well structured, contain all the relevant information, and, most importantly, stick out from all the other letters of motivation and/or cover letters that will have been submitted.

Though there are similarities between a letter of motivation and a cover letter in that both are used to inform the recruiter or educational officer of why you are the perfect candidate, and both allow candidates to explain about their motivation, interests, hobbies, achievements, and career/academic future, a letter of motivation and a cover letter are not one and the same; they are two different documents.

8.1. What is a Letter of Motivation?

A *letter of motivation* (*motivational letter*) is a one-page document used to describe why a candidate is the perfect choice for a certain position, it is usually attached to the CV/résumé, and it is seen as a powerful closing sales pitch for a university or non-profit organisation. It is not commonly used for paid job applications, which are typically accompanied by a cover letter.

A letter of motivation and a cover letter differ in terms of their objectives, where the former notes the candidate's skills, motivations and the experiences that make them want to do the job they are applying for; highlights the candidate's academic achievements, ambitions, goals and reasons why they are applying for the specific course or job; and is used by university admission offices, educational institutes and internships.

A letter of motivation would be submitted when the candidate is applying to get admitted to an educational programme at a college or university (undergraduate, graduate, or postgraduate); applying to work at a non-profit organisation; applying as a volunteer in an organisation; or applying for an internship in a company.

8.2. Structure of a Letter of Motivation

A letter of motivation is a personal document detailing one's professional skills and reasons for applying for a course of study, a scholarship, an internship or a volunteer job. In terms of its length, as noted above, it should be approximately one page long, divided into paragraphs. A three-paragraph division would be structured as introduction-body-conclusion, whereas a five-to-seven-paragraph division would more or less have the same introduction-body-conclusion, but the body paragraph would, itself, consist of three to five separate sections.

The Table below provides the elements a letter of motivation consists of, with accompanying examples.

Component	Purpose	Example
Header	Provides contact details of the sender and recipient, plus the date.	Your Name 123 Academic Road Berlin, Germany email@example.com +49 170 0000000 Admissions Office University of XYZ Application Department

Component	Purpose	Example
		Address Line 13 July 2025
Introduction	States who you are and clearly explains why you are applying.	I am writing to express my interest in the MA programme in International Relations at XYZ University. With a BA in Political Science and a strong passion for global governance, I am eager to pursue advanced study in this field.
Body	Presents your academic background, key skills, experiences, achievements, and relevant traits.	My undergraduate degree focused on diplomacy and conflict studies, and I wrote my thesis on peacebuilding in the Balkans. I completed an internship with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and led several student debate initiatives. In addition to my academic work, I am fluent in English and German, and I have volunteered as a youth mentor, which has strengthened my leadership and intercultural communication skills.
Conclusion	Brief and focused. Reiterates your motivation, outlines your future goals, and includes a call to action (CTA).	This programme is an ideal next step towards my goal of working in international diplomacy. I would be honoured to contribute to and grow within your academic community. I look forward to the opportunity to discuss my application further.
Sign-off	Closes the letter professionally with your contact details.	Respectfully yours, Elena Petrova elena.petrova@email.com +359 88 000 0000

Table 24. Structure of a letter of motivation

8.3. Writing an Effective Letter of Motivation

An effective letter of motivation goes beyond just listing qualifications or summarising a CV. It should be tailored to the specific programme or position, clearly linking the candidate's background, interests, and goals with what the institution or employer is seeking. For this reason, it is crucial that it opens with a focused, purposeful introduction that avoids vague or generic statements.

In addition, two or three key experiences or skills should be expanded on in depth, with precise, direct language and active voice that convey the candidate's achievements and growth. These would preferably show how the candidate's past experiences have shaped their current interests and how they

align with their future goals. It would also be useful to mention specific features of the institution, programme, or role that arouse special interest, in this way demonstrating that additional research has been done.

In terms of the tone, it should be formal yet authentic; enthusiastic without exaggeration. Clichés should be avoided, a variety of sentence structures should be used to ensure fluency, with a clear, logical structure throughout, and smooth transitions between paragraphs. The letter should conclude with a polite thank-you and a clear indication of the candidate's interest in the next step.

8.4. Sample Letters of Motivation

Below are three sample letters of motivation that would be used in different contexts.

Postgraduate Programme

Anna Nowak
ul. Krakowska 12/4
00-123 Warsaw
Poland
anna.nowak@email.com
+48 123 456 789

10 July 2025

Admissions Committee
School of Philosophy, Psychology & Language Sciences
University of Edinburgh
3 Charles Street
Edinburgh EH8 9AD
United Kingdom

Dear Members of the Admissions Committee,
I am writing to express my strong interest in applying for the MA programme in Applied Linguistics at the University of Edinburgh. As a final-year student of English Language and Literature at the University of Warsaw, I have developed a keen interest in the relationship between language acquisition and instructional design, which I would like to explore in greater depth in your programme.

Throughout my undergraduate studies, I have taken courses in syntax, semantics, psycholinguistics, and EFL methodology, and I have also participated in peer-tutoring programmes. My senior thesis focuses on task-based learning and its effect on vocabulary retention among EFL learners. I am particularly drawn to your programme's focus on sociolinguistics and corpus-based research, as well as the opportunity to work with researchers such as Prof. Janet Smith, whose work on classroom interaction I have cited in my own writing.

Pursuing this MA would allow me to advance my academic skills, contribute to ongoing research, and eventually pursue a PhD in language education. I believe that my academic background, work ethic, and passion for language teaching make me a strong candidate.

Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to the possibility of contributing to and learning from your dynamic academic community.

Yours sincerely,
Anna Nowak

Internship

Petar Dimitrov
ul. Ilindenska 45
1000 Skopje
Macedonia
petar.dimitrov@email.com
+359 88 123 4567

10 July 2025

Erasmus+ Internship Selection Committee
InnovEdTech
Carrer de Casp, 118
08013 Barcelona
Spain

Dear Members of the Selection Committee,
I am writing to express my enthusiasm for the Erasmus+ Internship placement in Educational Technology with InnovEdTech in Barcelona. As a final-year English major with a minor in Computer Science at Sofia University, I am eager to combine my interests in education and digital innovation in a practical, international setting.

During my studies, I have worked on digital storytelling projects, developed basic educational apps using HTML and JavaScript, and completed a teaching practicum where I integrated digital tools into lesson planning. I am especially interested in the development of accessible e-learning materials and would welcome the opportunity to contribute to the design and testing of such content at InnovEdTech.

An Erasmus+ internship would enable me to gain international work experience, improve my intercultural communication skills, and explore career pathways at the intersection of education and technology. I am confident that I would be a committed and proactive member of your team.

Thank you for considering my application. I would be delighted to provide any further information as required.

Yours sincerely,
Petar Dimitrov

Graduate Job

Elina Saarinen
Rautatienkatu 21 B 6
33100 Tampere
Finland
elina.saarinen@email.com
+358 40 123 4567

10 July 2025

Hiring Manager
NatWest Group
125 Kingsley Road
Oxford OX4 2RJ
United Kingdom

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am writing to apply for the Graduate Analyst position at NatWest Group, as advertised. Having recently completed my degree in Economics from the University of Helsinki, I am eager to apply my analytical skills, quantitative knowledge, and problem-solving abilities to support your team in delivering data-driven insights and strategic decisions.

During my studies, I developed a strong foundation in financial analysis, econometrics, and risk assessment, complemented by advanced skills in

Excel, SQL, and data visualisation tools. My final-year research project, which analysed the impact of monetary policy changes on Nordic banking sector performance, strengthened my ability to interpret complex data, identify patterns, and present clear, actionable recommendations.

I am particularly drawn to NatWest Group's reputation for innovation and client-centred service. The opportunity to work within a collaborative environment where I can contribute to market analysis, performance evaluation, and strategic planning aligns perfectly with my professional aspirations.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss how my education, technical skills, and enthusiasm for financial markets can add value to your Graduate Analyst team.

Yours sincerely,
Elina Saarinen

8.5. What is a Cover Letter?

A *cover letter* is a one-page document submitted as part of a job application, typically alongside a CV or résumé. The purpose of the cover letter is to introduce the candidate and briefly summarise their professional background. It highlights how specific qualifications and experiences listed in the CV align with the requirements of the job opening. In terms of length, like the letter of motivation, it should be brief and concise, approximately 250-400 words, as it serves as a focused introduction for the hiring manager.

A standard cover letter usually consists of three to four paragraphs: an *opening* that states the position and expresses interest; a *middle section/body* that connects relevant skills and experiences to the role; and a *conclusion* that reiterates interest and availability for an interview. The tone should be formal and professional, with clear, direct language; contractions, slang, or vague statements should be avoided, and the letter should be tailored to the specific role and employer.

8.6. Structure of a Cover Letter

Like the letter of motivation, the cover letter, too, is made up of certain components, which are provided in the Table below.

Component	Purpose	Example
Header	Include your name and contact information (top of the page) followed by	Your Name 123 Student Street, London, UK

Component	Purpose	Example
	the employer's details.	email@example.com +44 7000 000000 Hiring Manager XYZ Ltd. 456 Business Road Manchester, UK
Date	Use the day/month/year format, placed before the salutation.	13 July 2025
Greeting	Address the letter to a specific person if possible; otherwise, use a professional alternative.	Dear Ms Jenkins, or Dear Hiring Manager, (if no name is provided)
Opening paragraph	State the position you are applying for and where you found the listing; express genuine interest.	I am writing to apply for the position of Marketing Assistant as advertised on your company's website. I am particularly drawn to your team's focus on ethical branding and digital outreach.
Middle paragraph(s)	Match your qualifications, skills, or experience to the requirements in the job post.	During my final year at the University of Glasgow, I interned at a digital agency where I led a social media campaign that increased user engagement by 40%. My coursework in marketing strategy, combined with hands-on experience using Google Ads and Canva, has prepared me to contribute effectively to your team.
Final paragraph	Reaffirm your interest, show enthusiasm, and express readiness for an interview.	I would welcome the opportunity to contribute to your company's goals and would be glad to provide further information in an interview. Thank you for considering my application.
Complimentary close	Use a formal closing line followed by your name.	Yours sincerely, (if you used a name) Yours faithfully, (if no name was available) Elena Petrova
Signature (optional in print)	In printed versions, sign above your typed name.	(signature) Elena Petrova

Table 25. Structure of a cover letter

8.7. Writing an Effective Cover Letter

Writing an effective cover letter is probably the most challenging part of the application process. Not all cover letters get read, so when there is the chance to submit a cover letter, it is important to do so, as it may help in ultimately getting the job; it offers the best chance of getting the attention of the HR representative or hiring manager and it is an important opportunity to distinguish oneself from everyone else. In a tight job market, setting oneself apart is critical.

Writing an effective cover letter means going beyond a formal structure; it requires clarity, relevance, and personalisation. One of the most important principles is tailoring the letter to the specific job and company. Instead of sending the same letter everywhere, applicants should research the role and organisation, then reflect that knowledge in their writing. This can be done by referencing the company's values, ongoing projects, or specific responsibilities mentioned in the job post. A well-tailored cover letter shows genuine interest and effort, it shows that the applicant has done their homework about the company they are applying to, and it immediately sets them apart.

Another key feature is focus and conciseness. A good cover letter does not repeat the CV but instead highlights the most relevant experience or skills in a narrative form. Candidates should choose two or three points that directly align with the job requirements and expand on them with examples that demonstrate impact. Specificity and clarity are essential, and vague claims like "I am a hard worker" do not mean much without evidence. Instead, applicants should show how they have applied their skills in practice and what results they achieved.

Tone and language also play a crucial role. A cover letter should sound professional and confident, without being overly formal or impersonal. Clichés and filler phrases should be avoided, and active voice and direct language should be used. In addition, a polite but engaged tone should be maintained throughout. The letter should end with a clear closing, with a reaffirmed interest in the role, willingness to attend an interview expressed, and thanking the reader for their time.

The Table below provides tips for writing an effective cover letter, with various tips missing. Use the information available to fill in the blanks that have been marked with ---.

Category	Tip	Explanation
Before writing	---	Learn about the organisation and tailor the cover letter accordingly. Never send a generic, one-size-fits-all letter.

Category	Tip	Explanation
	Reach out if possible	Use *LinkedIn* or social media to find the hiring manager or relevant contact person. A brief pre-application message can make the letter stand out.
	---	Avoid "To whom it may concern." A named greeting shows attention to detail and professionalism.
	---	If someone at the company referred you or you have interacted with the team, say so early in the letter.
Opening strongly	Start with a strong, engaging first line	Do not start with "I am writing to apply..." Open with *why you are excited about the job and what you offer*, as for example: "I am a fundraising professional with 15+ years of experience..."
	Avoid clichés and generic openers	Make the introduction purposeful, specific, and interesting.
Structure and focus	---	The cover letter complements the CV. The focus is on *why you are applying* and *what you want to do*, not where you have been.
	Focus on the future	Emphasise where you are headed and how the job aligns with your goals.
	---	Mention something about the industry or company to demonstrate insight, as for example, "In a rapidly shifting media landscape..."
	Match your skills to their needs	Frame your experience as a *solution* to the employer's challenges.
Tone and language	---	Confidence and interest are good; desperation and over-flattery are not.
	---	250-400 words max, and no overly long paragraphs.
	---	"I led," "I supported," "I implemented", and no vague or passive phrasing.
What to highlight	Share a specific accomplishment	Show how you have added value, as for example, "I increased student engagement by 35% using digital tools."
	---	Especially if you are changing fields or newly graduated, as adaptability and fast learning are valuable in any context.
	---	Connect your past experience to the company's current or future needs.

Category	Tip	Explanation
Closing the letter	Include a clear call to action	Express willingness for an interview and thank the reader, as for example, with "I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this role further."
	---	Yours sincerely, (if named); Yours faithfully, (if unnamed). Include your name, email, and phone number.
Final thoughts	✅ Do: ---	✖ Don't: ---

Table 26. Tips for writing an effective cover letter

8.8. Sample Cover Letters

GRADUATE JOB

Elena Marković
elena.markovic@email.com
+43 660 123 4567
Mariahilferstraße 89
1060 Vienna, Austria

13 July 2025

Hiring Manager
BrightPath Communications
Kärntner Ring 5–7
1010 Vienna, Austria

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am writing to apply for the position of Marketing Assistant at BrightPath Communications, as advertised on your website. As a recent graduate with a BA in English and Communication from the University of Vienna and internship experience in content creation and campaign coordination, I am confident in my ability to contribute to your innovative marketing team.

During my six-month internship at MediaLab Group, I collaborated with cross-functional teams to develop digital content, analyse audience engagement, and support the rollout of an influencer campaign that increased website traffic by 38%. My coursework in media writing and brand strategy,

combined with hands-on experience using tools such as Canva, Hootsuite, and Google Analytics, has equipped me with both creative and analytical skills that align with your team's goals.

I am particularly drawn to BrightPath's focus on sustainable branding and multilingual content, and I am excited about the opportunity to support campaigns that engage diverse audiences. I would welcome the chance to discuss how my background and enthusiasm can support your marketing efforts.

Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to the opportunity to speak with you further.

Yours sincerely,
Elena Marković

INTERNSHIP

Jakub Nowicki
jakub.nowicki@email.com
+48 511 345 678
ul. Mickiewicza 24
31-120 Kraków, Poland

13 July 2025

Erasmus+ Placement Coordinator
Language Education Unit
Colégio Internacional do Porto
Rua de Santa Catarina 113
4000-447 Porto, Portugal

Dear Erasmus+ Placement Coordinator,

I am writing to express my interest in the Erasmus+ internship placement at your language education centre. I am currently in my final year of a BA in English Philology at the Jagiellonian University, and I am eager to apply my skills in a real classroom setting while contributing to your school's commitment to language development.

As part of my university programme, I have completed coursework in ELT methodology, lesson planning, and classroom observation. I also volunteer with a local youth centre, where I tutor children in English through games and task-based activities. These experiences have helped me develop strong

interpersonal skills, patience, and the ability to adapt my communication to different age groups and learning needs.

Teaching in a multicultural, international environment such as yours would be an invaluable learning experience and an important step towards my goal of becoming an EFL teacher. I would be honoured to support your learners and gain practical insights into teaching practice.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to the opportunity to contribute to your team.

Yours sincerely,
Jakub Nowicki

ACADEMIC LECTURESHIP POSITION

Dr Sofia Petrescu
sofia.petrescu@email.com
+40 742 000 987
Strada Academiei 19
Bucharest, Romania

13 July 2025

Search Committee
Department of Cultural Studies
Central European University
Nádor u. 9
1051 Budapest, Hungary

Dear Members of the Search Committee,

I am writing to express my interest in the position of Lecturer in Cultural Studies recently advertised on your university's website. I am currently completing a postdoctoral research fellowship in Visual Culture at the University of Bucharest, and I hold a PhD in Media and Cultural Studies from the same institution. I believe my research profile, international teaching experience, and commitment to interdisciplinary inquiry make me a strong fit for your department.

My doctoral and postdoctoral research has focused on visual activism and identity politics in post-socialist Eastern Europe, with particular attention to public art, protest aesthetics, and digital representation. I have published in peer-reviewed journals such as *Cultural Politics* and *East European Po-*

litics and Societies, and my current project examines how image-based protest circulates across transnational feminist networks. My future research aims to expand this work through collaborative, grant-funded inquiry on affective resistance and mediated memory.

In addition to research, I bring five years of university-level teaching experience, having delivered undergraduate and MA-level courses in media theory, visual culture, gender studies, and qualitative research methods. I have supervised BA and MA theses and have received consistently strong student feedback for fostering inclusive, critically engaged learning environments.

I am particularly drawn to Central European University's commitment to public-facing scholarship and transdisciplinary dialogue, and I see a strong alignment between your faculty's current projects and my research interests. I would be honoured to contribute to your department's teaching, mentoring, and intellectual community.

Thank you for considering my application. I welcome the opportunity to provide further materials and to discuss how my background and interests can support the department's academic mission.

Yours sincerely,
Dr Sofia Petrescu

8.9. Exercises

<u>EXERCISE 8.</u>

Below are three letters of motivation (Excerpts 1-3) in connection to a make-up artist position. Carefully read and analyse them, and then decide which are good and which are not, noting the reasons why.

Excerpt 1:

Dear Mr. Geoffrey,

Your job description caught my interest. As a young child, I've always been interested in make-up and beauty. Whenever I had the chance, I would always put on make-up, even though the other girls at school made fun of me.

I wasn't a typical child. Most children preferred to spend time outdoors. However, I chose to stay at home, playing with my dolls and putting make-up on them. Whenever I could, I'd practice on my sister, although she didn't always like the way I made her look. I learned, though!

I would spend countless hours watching make-up tutorials on YouTube. I've never worked in the beauty industry, but I'd say I'm a pretty good ma-

ke-up artist. My sister now agrees with me, although nowadays, I try to practice with my friends whenever possible, even though they sometimes think I'm annoying :)

In any case, that's why I really want this job. I hope you consider me for this position.

Sincerely,

Sarah

Excerpt 2:

Hi Hiring Manager,

I'm writing about the job position you posted for an intern. I consider myself a pro, so I'm only really applying for this position because I need to boost my résumé with some actual experience. Besides, I'm pretty bored at the moment, as I'm on a break from my studies, so why not? I could use the extra cash, too.

If you're interested, let me know.

All the best,

Jared

Excerpt 3:

Dear Mr Black,

I am writing to apply for the position of make-up artist, as advertised in *The Guardian* on 30 November. Please find my CV enclosed for your consideration.

My training and experience have prepared me well for this role. Throughout my studies and hands-on work in the beauty and fashion industry, I have developed a strong foundation in make-up artistry, including techniques for both editorial and on-camera looks. My course in *Creative Make-up Techniques* required in-depth research, practical skills, and an understanding of the fashion and media industries, all of which I found deeply engaging and motivating.

I take pride in my precision, creativity, and ability to work under pressure while meeting client expectations. I am confident working both independently and as part of a team, and I bring enthusiasm, professionalism, and attention to detail to every assignment.

I am available to start immediately and would welcome the opportunity to contribute my skills and energy to your team. Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to the possibility of discussing this role further.

Yours sincerely,

David

<u>**EXERCISE 9.**</u>

Below are three letters of motivation (Excerpts A-C) in connection to a job vacancy/camp counsellor position. Carefully read and analyse them, and then decide which are good and which are not, noting the reasons why.

Excerpt A:

Dear Mr Brown,

I am writing to enquire if you have any vacancies in your company. I enclose my CV for your information.

As you can see, I have had extensive vacation work experience in office environments, the retail sector and service industries, giving me varied skills and the ability to work with many different types of people. I believe I could fit easily into your team.

I am a conscientious person who works hard and pays attention to detail. I'm flexible, quick to pick up new skills and eager to learn from others. I also have lots of ideas and enthusiasm. I'm keen to work for a company with a great reputation and a high profile like yours.

I have excellent references and would be delighted to discuss any possible vacancy with you at your convenience. In case you don't have any suitable openings at the moment, I'd be grateful if you would keep my CV on file for any future possibilities.

Yours sincerely,
Rose

Excerpt B:

Hi Mr Hunt,

I'd like to apply for a job position at your firm. Man, am I glad to have found your job listing! I really hope you consider my application, because this job search has brought nothing but frustrations up until this point. It seems like most recruiters don't value true talent and dedication.

Besides, the job market is oversaturated now, with the economy and all. Most of my emails don't even get answered, which really blows my mind considering how qualified I am.

Xo,
Sandy

Excerpt C:

Hi Kelly,

This email is in regard to the open job position of a camp counsellor. I'm looking for a summer job, and even though I'm not really that great with

kids (I'm an only child and never had much experience dealing with children), I wanted to apply for the job. Some of my strengths include being consistent, always showing up to work on time, and giving each project I take on my best.

Please let me know once you have made a decision.

Humbly,

Samantha

EXERCISE 10.

Re-read the letters of motivation from the two previous exercises above (Excerpts 1-3 and A-C) and rewrite and improve each one bearing in mind appropriate tone, structure, clarity, and relevance in this kind of writing. For each excerpt:

- – identify what is wrong (e.g., too vague, too informal, off-topic, repetitive, lacks focus);
- – rewrite the excerpt so that it becomes clearer, more relevant, and more appropriate for an academic or professional letter;
- – use formal language, specific details, and a confident but polite tone.

8.10. Writing Tasks

Writing Task 6 - write a formal, well-structured letter of motivation (300-400 words, one page) tailored to an academic or professional opportunity. Use formal, concise academic English, maintain clear paragraph structure and professional formatting, avoid repetition of information already listed in the CV, and stay focused on relevant qualifications and goals.

Choose a context: MA programme; Erasmus+ mobility; internship or training placement (real or imagined).

Required sections:

- – Introduction: briefly state who you are and your purpose for writing.
- – Body: outline your educational background, key skills, and any relevant work or volunteer experience that qualifies you for the opportunity.
- – Conclusion: emphasise your future goals and motivation; include a call to action (e.g., looking forward to an interview or next steps).

Peer feedback task:

Exchange your letter of motivation with a peer and then follow the steps below:

1. Read your peer's letter of motivation twice, once to form an overall impression and a second time to examine the details.

2. Complete the Letter of Motivation Writing Assessment Rubric (below) for your peer, assigning a score of 1, 3 or 5 to each criterion.

3. For each score awarded, write one or two sentences explaining your reasoning, citing specific examples from the letter of motivation.

4. Identify two or three aspects that were done well.

5. Suggest two or three concrete changes that could improve the letter of motivation.

6. Use polite, constructive language and avoid vague comments.

Useful language for peer feedback:

— *One strength of your letter of motivation is...*
— *This section is clear and well organised.*
— *Consider improving the section on...*
— *You could clarify this sentence by...*
— *The tone could be made more formal by...*
— *Try replacing "X" with a more specific action verb like...*
— *This part is effective because...*
— *Check for consistency in...*

Letter of Motivation Writing Assessment Rubric with Scoring and Comments

Criteria	Score (1/3/5)	Comments
Content and structure Are all required parts included (introduction, body, conclusion)? Is the letter logically organised and clearly focused on the academic/professional opportunity?		
Language and style Is the language formal, appropriate, and concise? Are tone and register suitable for the context?		

Criteria	Score (1/3/5)	Comments
Grammar and mechanics Are there any grammar, spelling, or punctuation errors that impact clarity or professionalism?		
Format and presentation Is the letter visually professional (paragraph structure, alignment, spacing)? Is formatting consistent throughout?		
Relevance and persuasiveness Is the letter well-tailored to the opportunity? Does it effectively highlight qualifications, motivation, and future goals?		

Table 27. Letter of Motivation Writing Assessment Rubric

Writing Task 7 - write a formal, well-structured cover letter (250-400 words, one page) tailored to a job posting. Use professional, concise English with appropriate register and formatting. Maintain clear paragraph structure, avoid redundancy with the CV, and focus on how your qualifications align with the specific role.

Context: apply for the position of Communications Assistant at GreenWave International, a remote role (EU-based candidates preferred) supporting media outreach, social media content, and climate action campaigns. Ideal candidates demonstrate strong writing skills, an interest in sustainability, and some related experience (e.g., internships, student projects).

Reflect on the following questions to guide your content:

– Why are you interested in this role and this organisation?
– What specific skills or experience match the job description?
– What is one notable achievement you can highlight?
– Which transferable skills should be emphasised?
– How will you close the letter with a clear call to action?

Required sections:

– Opening paragraph: introduce yourself, state the position you are applying for, and express enthusiasm for the role.
– Middle paragraph(s): provide evidence of relevant experiences, achievements, and transferable skills. Link them clearly to the job requirements and organisational goals.

– Closing paragraph: reaffirm your interest, express your readiness to contribute, and include a professional call to action (e.g., availability for an interview).

Peer feedback task:

Exchange your cover letter with a peer and then follow the steps below:

1. Read your peer's cover letter twice, once to form an overall impression and a second time to examine the details.

2. Complete the Cover Letter Writing Assessment Rubric (below) for your peer, assigning a score of 1, 3 or 5 to each criterion.

3. For each score awarded, write one or two sentences explaining your reasoning, citing specific examples from the cover letter.

4. Identify two or three aspects that were done well.

5. Suggest two or three concrete changes that could improve the cover letter.

6. Use polite, constructive language and avoid vague comments.

Useful language for peer feedback:

– *One strength of your cover letter is...*
– *This section is clear and well organised.*
– *Consider improving the section on...*
– *You could clarify this sentence by...*
– *The tone could be made more formal by...*
– *Try replacing "X" with a more specific action verb like...*
– *This part is effective because...*
– *Check for consistency in...*

**Cover Letter Writing Assessment Rubric
with Scoring and Comments**

Criteria	Score (1/3/5)	Comments
Content and structure Are all required sections present? Is the cover letter well-organised and tailored to the context?		
Language and style Is the language formal, clear, and concise? Are informal expressions avoided?		

Criteria	Score (1/3/5)	Comments
Grammar and mechanics Are there spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors?		
Format and presentation Is the layout professional? Is formatting consistent (spacing, font, alignment)?		
Relevance and accuracy Is the content relevant to the opportunity? Are experience and skills clearly connected to the role?		

Table 28. Cover Letter Writing Assessment Rubric

9. Writing Letters of Recommendation

Letters of recommendation, also known as recommendation letters, play a crucial role in academic and professional advancement, particularly for final-year EFL university students who are preparing to transition into post-graduate studies, international exchange programmes, or competitive job markets. These letters serve as a form of external validation, offering insight into a student's capabilities from the perspective of a teacher, mentor, or academic supervisor. Because they are written by someone with direct experience of the student's work and character, they carry significant weight in decision-making processes, often tipping the balance between equally qualified candidates.

Their importance lies not only in what they say, but also in who writes them and how well they are written. A strong, well-articulated letter can confirm a student's academic achievements, highlight key strengths such as leadership, perseverance, and initiative, and provide a fuller picture of the student beyond grades and test scores. For EFL students in particular, these letters can also help bridge gaps in communication by affirming qualities that may not be easily conveyed through standardised applications. As such, understanding the conventions and expectations surrounding letters of recommendation is essential for grasping their strategic value in academic and professional contexts.

9.1. What is a Letter of Recommendation?

A *letter of recommendation* is a formal written endorsement provided by someone, typically a professor, mentor, or academic supervisor, who can attest to a student's qualifications, character, and overall suitability for a specific academic or professional opportunity. It is often required when applying for postgraduate studies, internships, scholarships, academic exchanges, or job positions. This type of letter serves as a third-party evaluation, offering insight into the applicant's academic performance, work ethic, personal qualities, and potential contributions. It complements other application materials such as CVs, academic transcripts, or motivation letters, providing a more holistic and credible picture of the candidate.

The *recommender*, also known as the *referee*, should be someone who is familiar with the student's academic background and personal attributes, and who can confidently speak about their strengths. A well-written letter of recommendation is objective and specific, typically including examples of the student's achievements, skills, or professional conduct. Because these letters often carry significant weight in selection processes, choosing the right person to write them is essential. In academic and professional contexts, they help decision-makers evaluate an applicant more comprehensively and objectively, and may ultimately influence the final outcome.

In some situations, students may even be asked to draft a letter of recommendation themselves, which is a task that requires a high level of linguistic precision, genre awareness, and rhetorical sensitivity. As such, letters of recommendation are a valuable learning opportunity in both academic writing and professional communication.

9.2. Letters of Recommendation versus Reference Letters

Letters of recommendation and *reference letters* are similar, but they are not exactly the same, with the distinction set primarily in their *purpose, content*, and *context*.

Thus, *letters of recommendation* tend to be usually written in advance, specifically for a known opportunity, such as for a university programme, scholarship, or internship; they are detailed and tailored, often addressing the applicant's qualifications in relation to the specific role or programme, and structured typically with an *introduction, body* (providing evidence of skills / qualities), and a *conclusion with a clear endorsement*. They tend to be more common in academic and formal professional contexts, especially when applying for postgraduate study or research positions and are often submitted directly to the institution, not seen by the applicant.

Reference letters, or letters of reference, can be both pre-written and general, i.e., a character or employment reference, or tailored upon request. They are less specific, simply confirming the applicant's past responsibilities, performance, or character, and are often requested by employers during the hiring process, sometimes accompanied by a phone reference. In addition, they are less structured, and sometimes written in response to a direct request from the employer, usually kept on file or handed over to the applicant to use as needed.

Thus, though we may say that all letters of recommendation are reference letters, not all reference letters are recommendations in the full, tailored sense. For academic and postgraduate contexts, a letter of recommendation is the more precise and appropriate term.

9.3. Structure of a Letter of Recommendation

A well-structured letter of recommendation typically follows a clear and formal format, consisting of several distinct components, which ensures that the letter is coherent, persuasive, and appropriate for academic or professional evaluation. Each part serves a specific communicative purpose and contributes to the overall effectiveness of the letter in presenting the candidate's qualifications and potential.

Component	Purpose	Example
Greeting	Opens the letter with a formal salutation, addressing the recipient directly if known, or using a general greeting if not.	Dear Admissions Committee Dear Dr Smith To Whom It May Concern
Introduction	States the referee's name, position, and relationship to the applicant. Includes the purpose of the letter and a clear statement of recommendation. Establishes credibility and context.	I am writing to recommend [Student's Name], who has been a student in my [Course Name] class at [Institution]. As a [position], I have had the opportunity to observe [his/her/their] academic growth and dedication.
Body	Provides specific examples of the applicant's skills, achievements, and character. Highlights relevant academic performance, personal	[Student's Name] consistently demonstrated strong analytical thinking and excellent written communication in English. For instance, [he/she/they] completed an independent research project on [topic], showing initiative and academic rigour.

Component	Purpose	Example
	qualities, and, in the EFL context, language development.	[His/Her/Their] ability to engage in critical discussion in English improved remarkably throughout the course.
Conclusion	Restates the recommendation clearly. Expresses confidence in the applicant's future and invites follow-up if needed.	I strongly recommend [Student's Name] for [Programme/Position]. I am confident [he/she/they] will make a valuable contribution. Please feel free to contact me for any further information.
Sign-off	Closes the letter formally with the referee's full name, title, and contact information.	Sincerely, Dr Anna Novak Associate Professor in English Studies anna.novak@university.edu +389 70 000 000

Table 29. Structure of a letter of recommendation

9.4. Types of Letters of Recommendation

There are several types of letters of recommendation, each serving a different purpose depending on the context. While they share a common structure and tone, the content, focus, and intended audience can vary significantly. Each type has its own conventions and areas of emphasis, and these distinctions should be understood in order to request the appropriate letter, provide the right supporting information, and interpret the expectations of the audience. Below are the main types of letters of recommendation that may be of particular relevance to final-year EFL university students.

Academic Letter of Recommendation

This is the most common type for university students. It is typically written by a professor, academic advisor, or instructor, and supports applications for postgraduate studies, research programmes, academic scholarships, or study-abroad opportunities. The focus is on the student's intellectual abilities, academic performance, motivation, and potential for further study. It may also highlight specific coursework, research projects, or contributions in class.

Professional or Work-Based Letter of Recommendation

This type is written by a supervisor, employer, or internship coordinator, and is often used when applying for jobs, internships, or traineeships. It emphasises professional skills, such as reliability, communication, teamwork,

and initiative. In the EFL context, this letter may also reflect the student's ability to use English in workplace contexts.

Character Reference

This letter is less formal and is usually written by someone who knows the applicant personally, such as a mentor, community leader, or family friend. It vouches for the applicant's personal integrity, ethics, and character, and it is more common for volunteering roles, community programmes, or in cases where academic or professional experience is limited.

Composite or Committee Letter

In some academic institutions, a committee prepares a single letter that combines input from multiple instructors. This is especially common in medical or competitive graduate programmes. It presents a more comprehensive evaluation and often carries more institutional weight.

Template-Based or Drafted by the Student

In some contexts, especially in EFL environments, a recommender may ask the student to draft the letter themselves for review and signing. This is more common when time is limited or when the student's accomplishments need to be presented in a way that the recommender may not fully articulate in English. While still formal and personalised, such letters require careful attention to tone, self-representation, and linguistic precision.

9.5. Sample Letters of Recommendation

Below are three fully formatted sample letters of recommendation, each representing a different context.

ACADEMIC LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION
(Postgraduate Studies Application)

[University Letterhead or Recommender's Address]
Dr Joanna Smith
Assistant Professor of English
Department of English and American Studies
Faculty of Philology
University of Leeds
jsmith@unileeds.edu.uk
+389 2 123 4567

Date: 14 July 2025

To the Admissions Committee,

I am writing to offer my strongest recommendation for Ms Biljana Petrova, who has been my student for the past two years in both Advanced Academic Writing and Seminar in Applied Linguistics. As a professor with over 15 years of experience working with high-achieving students, I can confidently state that Biljana is among the top 5% of students I have ever taught.

Throughout her studies, Biljana has consistently demonstrated exceptional analytical skills, intellectual curiosity, and linguistic precision. Her research project on genre-based approaches to EFL writing was not only well-researched and methodologically sound, but it also revealed a maturity in argumentation and critical engagement with scholarly sources. Beyond her academic performance, she actively contributed to classroom discussions, peer feedback sessions, and even assisted in organising a departmental writing workshop for younger students.

I have no doubt that Biljana will thrive in a rigorous postgraduate environment. She possesses the discipline, passion, and communicative competence required to succeed in international academic settings. I give her my full recommendation for admission to your MA programme and would be happy to provide further information if needed.

Sincerely,
Dr Joanna Smith
University of Leeds

PROFESSIONAL/INTERNSHIP LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

Eleonora Trajkovska
Project Manager
Global Language Solutions
eleonora.trajkovska@gls.org
+389 2 456 7890

Date: 14 July 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

It is with great pleasure that I recommend Mr Aleksandar Stanoev for any internship or entry-level position in the field of language services, editing, or international communication. Aleksandar worked under my supervision for three months as an intern at Global Language Solutions, where he supported our content development and translation projects.

Aleksandar demonstrated remarkable attention to detail, organisational skills, and a strong command of English, especially given that he was completing his studies in an EFL context. He regularly took initiative, asked insightful questions, and handled tight deadlines with professionalism and calm. Notably, his work on adapting educational materials for a multilingual platform was praised by our editorial team.

He is a dependable and resourceful individual who would be an asset to any team. I fully support his application and recommend him without hesitation.

Yours faithfully,
Eleonora Trajkovska
Project Manager, GLS

Character Reference
(Scholarship/Volunteering)

Professor Martin Iliev
Coordinator, Student Support Centre
University of Skopje
martin.iliev@uniskopje.edu.mk

Date: 14 July 2025

To the Selection Committee,

I am writing to recommend Ms Kristina Ivanova in support of her application for the Global Youth Leadership Scholarship. I have known Kristina in my role as Coordinator of the Student Support Centre for over a year, during which she has volunteered with our peer mentoring programme and organised multiple student outreach events.

Kristina is a warm, reliable, and highly empathetic individual. Her ability to work with students from diverse backgrounds, including international exchange participants, is outstanding. She communicates clearly in both Macedonian and English and has frequently assisted in mediating group discussions and planning inclusive initiatives.

Her commitment to community service and personal integrity make her an ideal candidate for this opportunity. I recommend her wholeheartedly and am confident she will make a meaningful contribution to your programme.

Yours sincerely,
Prof Martin Iliev
Student Support Centre
University of Skopje

9.6. Concluding Remarks on Letters of Recommendation

With the ascent of various AI tools and AI-powered language models such as ChatGPT, we may ask ourselves how necessary it is to know how to write this type of letter, or any other type, for that matter. How safe is it to one's identity to delegate the crafting of a personal, evaluative, and ethically weighted document, such as a letter of recommendation, to an algorithm trained on generalised data? While AI can assist with structure, grammar, or tone, it cannot replicate the authenticity, accountability, and nuanced judgement that such a letter requires from a real human recommender.

The credibility of a recommendation lies in the professional relationship between the writer and the candidate, not just in well-chosen words. A letter produced by AI, even if stylistically flawless, lacks the ethical foundation and personal responsibility that genuine endorsements carry. For EFL students in particular, learning how to write, understand, and evaluate such letters is still essential, not only as a writing skill but also as a part of broader academic literacy and professional integrity. AI may be a powerful tool, but it cannot replace the trust and discernment embedded in human judgement.

At the moment, letters of recommendation are undergoing a digital transformation. Increasingly, endorsements are appearing on professional networking platforms or as skill-based confirmations submitted through online portals. Technology now plays a growing role in how these recommendations are requested, delivered, and even verified. While this shift offers convenience, it also introduces new concerns. When engaging in online communication or uploading sensitive documents, it is vital to be aware of the risks associated with the digital landscape. One major concern is the possibility of a letter being intercepted, altered, or misused by malicious third parties. Unauthorised access could lead to the exposure of personal or financial information, making individuals vulnerable to fraud, impersonation, or identity theft.

Therefore, as letters of recommendation continue to evolve in format and method, it becomes increasingly important to prioritise digital security, and maintain vigilance when sharing or storing such documents. While AI and digital tools may streamline the process, they cannot replace the ethical responsibility and human insight that a genuine, thoughtfully composed letter of recommendation represents.

9.7. Exercises

Exercise 11. Use ChatGPT to generate a letter of recommendation and then discuss the issues/(dis)advantages. Experiment with different prompts and see if you can reach any conclusions.

Exercise 12. Working together in small groups (2-4 students), list what qualities and examples make a letter of recommendation strong, credible, and convincing.

Exercise 13. Below is a partially completed letter of recommendation. Fill in the missing parts using appropriate phrases and content. Use formal and respectful language, appropriate tone, and avoid vague or overly emotional expressions.

To Whom It May Concern,

I am pleased to write this letter of recommendation for (1) _____, who has been a student in my (2) _____ course at the University of (3) _____. I have had the pleasure of observing her academic development over the past (4) _____ semesters.

(5) _____ has consistently demonstrated outstanding analytical and communication skills. Her written work is well-structured, original, and thoroughly researched. In one particular project on (6) _____, she showed great initiative and depth of insight.

What sets (7) _____ apart is her strong work ethic and her willingness to support peers in collaborative tasks. She also contributed meaningfully to class discussions and consistently sought feedback to improve her performance.

I have no doubt that she will thrive in (8) _____, and I recommend her without reservation. Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,
Dr Isidora Paunović
Senior Lecturer in English Language and Literature
University of Belgrade

Exercise 14. Below are three sample letters of recommendation (A-C) that you need to read and evaluate using the Evaluation Rubric provided below.

Sample Letter A

To Whom It May Concern,

I am delighted to write this letter in support of Ms Ana Petrova's application to your postgraduate programme in Linguistics. I have taught Ana in two advanced seminars and supervised her undergraduate thesis, during which she consistently impressed me with her critical thinking, precision in writing, and dedication to research.

Ana's final thesis on code-switching in bilingual communities was exceptional in its methodology and originality. She independently designed and conducted a small-scale field study and analysed the results with insight and academic rigour. Her written work is articulate, well-structured, and supported by relevant scholarship. Beyond her academic work, Ana was a responsible and respected peer mentor in our department's student support programme.

I have no doubt she will be an asset to any academic institution and I recommend her wholeheartedly.

Yours faithfully,
Dr Emilija Knauff
Associate Professor in English Linguistics

Sample Letter B

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to recommend Maksim Ilić, who has been a student in my translation course. Maksim attended my classes regularly and submitted all his assignments on time. He was polite and friendly in class.

While I cannot comment in detail on his academic work beyond my own course, he did reasonably well in the final exam. Maksim appears to be interested in the field of translation and showed some potential throughout the term. I hope he will continue to develop his skills in future studies.

Please consider his application.

Yours faithfully,
Prof Jelena T. Holmes

Sample Letter C

Hey,

This is about Jana. She asked me for a letter, so here it is. I guess she was okay in class. Came to most lectures, I think. I don't really know much about her work, but she seemed fine. She didn't cause trouble or anything.

Good luck with whatever she applied for.

M.

Letter of Recommendation Evaluation Rubric
with Scoring and Comments

Criteria	Excellent (5)	Satisfactory (3)	Needs improvement (1)
Structure and organisation	Clear introduction, logical flow, and strong conclusion	Generally clear but may lack cohesion in places	Disorganised or missing key parts of the letter

Criteria	Excellent (5)	Satisfactory (3)	Needs improvement (1)
Formal academic language	Consistent use of formal, precise, and respectful language	Mostly formal with occasional informal or vague expressions	Informal, casual, or grammatically weak throughout; cliché-like
Specificity of examples	Strong, detailed examples that clearly support the candidate's strengths	Some relevant examples, but lacking in detail or depth	Few or no examples; overly general or superficial
Purpose and relevance	Clear reason for writing and strong alignment with the intended purpose	Stated purpose is present but lacks focus or clarity	Unclear purpose or disconnected from the candidate's goals

Table 30. Evaluation Rubric

9.8. Writing Tasks

Writing Task 8 - working in pairs, you need to write a formal letter of recommendation (250-300 words) for one of your classmates, as if you were their professor, academic advisor, or internship supervisor. Compose a structured, persuasive letter using appropriate tone and vocabulary and pay attention to their academic or personal qualities from a professional perspective. You will need the following information from your partner:
- What course(s) have you done well in and why?
- Have you done any projects, research, or volunteering?
- What are your academic strengths?
- What personal qualities would a recommender highlight?
- What programme or opportunity are you applying for?

Include the following information:
- A brief introduction stating your (imagined) position and relationship to the student.
- Specific achievements or skills observed.
- Personal traits relevant to the opportunity.
- A confident and clear endorsement.
- Formal closing.

Exchange your drafted letters with your partner, read the letter written about you and complete the Peer Feedback Form below. Discuss any inaccuracies or areas for improvement in tone, content, or clarity.

Criteria	Yes	Somewhat	No	Comments
Clear structure (introduction, body, closing)				
Specific examples included				
Tone is appropriate and formal				
Endorsement sounds sincere and strong				
Relevant to the opportunity described				

Table 31. Peer Feedback Form

Writing Task 9 - identify the weakest letter of recommendation in Exercise 14 (Section 9.7.) and rewrite it into a formal letter of recommendation, using appropriate academic or professional language, standard letter structure, and relevant content additions.

10. Writing Letters Of Request

Letters of request are a formal way of asking for something: information, permission, assistance, documents, or support. Whether addressed to an individual, institution, or organisation, these letters function as tools for clear, respectful, and goal-oriented communication. They are essential in academic, professional, and administrative settings, where tone, structure, and precision can significantly impact the response received. A well-written letter of request does more than ask; it frames the request in a way that makes it reasonable, justified, and easy to grant.

Learning how to write this kind of letter improves one's ability to communicate needs diplomatically and persuasively. Knowing how to formulate a request clearly, with appropriate tone and supporting details, can open doors, strengthen relationships, and facilitate smoother interactions in various real-life scenarios, from applying for an extension or reference to requesting data or access. Effective request writing is not just a practical skill, it is a strategic advantage not just within the academic context but beyond, in real life.

10.1. What is a Letter of Request?

A *letter of request* is a formal or semi-formal written communication that explicitly asks for something to be done, provided, or considered. It typically follows a clear structure: an *introduction* stating the purpose, a *body* explaining the reason and context, and a *closing* that expresses appreciation

and outlines any expected follow-up. The tone is polite, respectful, and focused, ensuring the request is both reasonable and easy to understand.

The key elements of a letter of request include a clear subject or purpose, specific details about what is being requested, justification or background if needed, and a courteous closing. Depending on the audience, the level of formality may vary, but the core principle remains the same; clarity, conciseness, and courtesy are of vital importance.

A good letter of request also considers the recipient's perspective. It anticipates possible questions or concerns and addresses them in advance, making it easier for the reader to respond positively. Including relevant dates, deadlines, or documents can streamline the process and demonstrate professionalism. Ultimately, a strong letter of request respects the reader's time and decision-making process, which, in turn, increases the likelihood of a favourable outcome.

10.2. Structure of a Letter of Request

The Table below provides the structure of a letter of request, with appropriate explanations and examples.

Component	Purpose	Example
Greeting	Opens the letter with a formal salutation, addressing the recipient directly if known, or using a general greeting if not.	Dear Registrar Dear Sir or Madam
Introduction	States the purpose of the letter clearly and directly. Includes a respectful tone and a brief explanation of the reason for writing. Sets the context immediately.	I am writing to request a copy of my academic transcript for application purposes.
Body	Elaborates on the request with key details: what is needed, why, and by when. Includes any necessary background or context while maintaining a polite, cooperative tone.	I need the transcript by 14 August to complete my graduate application. The programme requires official records for processing.
Conclusion	Expresses appreciation, restates the request if needed, and offers to provide further information. Maintains a courteous, professional tone.	Thank you for your consideration. Please let me know if you need any additional documents.
Sign-off	Closes the letter formally with an appropriate ending and the writer's full name and contact details, if relevant.	Sincerely, Emina Adis emina.adis@email.com

Table 32. Structure of a letter of request

In terms of the reader's perspective, which was noted earlier, though it should be considered throughout the letter, it plays a particularly important role in the body and the conclusion.

In the body, thinking from the reader's point of view means anticipating what they need in order to fulfil the request easily and willingly. This includes providing all relevant details up front, dates, names, references, and supporting documents, so the reader does not have to ask for clarification. Also, if there is any potential inconvenience or reason why the request might be declined, the writer should address it briefly and diplomatically, for example, by offering flexibility with deadlines or explaining why the request is justified.

In the conclusion, a respectful tone is reinforced by acknowledging the reader's effort, time, or authority. It is also helpful to offer further cooperation, which shows awareness of the reader's potential next steps.

In fact, a thoughtful tone can make a difference even in the introduction. Avoiding bluntness and using phrasing that considers the reader's role (for example, "I would be grateful if you could..." rather than "I need you to...") makes the tone more cooperative from the very start.

In short, considering the reader's perspective means writing in a way that makes their job easier, shows appreciation for their time, and increases the chances of a favourable response, and each section works together to ensure that the message is polite, clear, and actionable.

10.3. Types of Letters of Request

There are several types of letters of request, depending on the purpose, audience, and context. While the overall structure remains similar, the tone (level of formality) and content (level of detail) may vary. All, however, benefit from clarity, courtesy, and logical structure. The main types of letters of request are presented below.

Formal Letters of Request

These are used in official or institutional settings, such as when writing to an employer, university, or public authority. The tone is polite, objective, and structured. Common examples include requests for certificates, permissions, leave, or official confirmations. They often follow standard formatting and require careful attention to tone and detail.

Semi-Formal Letters of Request

These are appropriate when addressing someone you know but still need to show respect, such as a professor, supervisor, or landlord. The langua-

ge is courteous but slightly more personal. These letters may involve requests for deadline extensions, clarifications, or meeting arrangements.

Informal Requests

Though not traditionally formatted as letters, informal requests, often sent as emails or messages, are frequent in casual or internal communication. These are used between friends, classmates, or close colleagues, and typically feature a friendly tone while still aiming for clarity and politeness. For instance, requesting help with a task or a document via email is an example of an informal request.

Business Letters of Request

These are used in professional transactions involving clients, suppliers, or partners. They are concise, formal, and task-oriented, often requesting information, quotations, proposals, or contract adjustments. These letters aim to maintain professional relations while efficiently conveying specific needs.

Academic Letters of Request

Typically written by students or researchers, these are used to request letters of recommendation, research permissions, deadline extensions, or feedback. The tone is respectful and formal, often showing deference to the recipient's position or expertise. Clear justification and politeness are essential here.

Legal or Administrative Requests

These are directed to government agencies or legal institutions and must follow precise guidelines. Examples include requests for public records, official documents, licenses, or legal verification. Such letters often require supporting documents and a strict adherence to formalities, including reference numbers, identification details, and deadlines.

10.4. Sample Letters of Request

Below are four fully formatted sample letters of request, each representing a different context: *formal, semi-formal, business*, and *academic*. These sample letters have been chosen to reflect a range of real-world request scenarios that are both relevant and instructive for our context, final-year university EFL students.

A *formal letter of request* is common in academic and professional contexts and it allows students to write to institutional bodies with a clear structure, precision, and respect. It includes standard conventions, such as student ID, purpose, deadline, and polite phrasing, which makes it a useful model for revising formal tone and administrative clarity.

A *semi-formal letter of request* bridges the gap between formal and informal, allowing students to maintain courtesy when writing to someone familiar but in a position of authority. It also illustrates how to phrase a sensitive or potentially problematic request, as, for example, asking for more time, in a tactful and responsible way.

A *business letter of request* introduces entry to workplace communication, which is important to students because even if still in academia, a number will move into professional contexts where they will need to request services, information, or cooperation. Thus, this sample demonstrates how to be concise, direct, and businesslike while still courteous, which are skills transferable across industries.

And, finally, an *academic letter of request,* highly relevant at this stage, especially for those who are preparing for postgraduate study, research, or academic exchanges. It differs from general formal letters in tone and content by emphasising academic hierarchy, respect for scholarly authority, and justification grounded in academic purpose.

Formal Letter of Request

Subject: Request for Academic Transcript

Dear Registrar,

I am writing to formally request an official copy of my academic transcript. I am currently applying to postgraduate programmes, and the universities require an official record of my academic performance.

My full name is Brianna Wu, and I graduated in June 2025 with a BA in English Philology (Student ID: 456789). I kindly ask that the transcript be sent to the following address:

University of Amsterdam / Admissions Office: Nieuwe Achtergracht 166, 1018 WV Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

Please let me know if there are any fees or forms I need to complete. I would be grateful if the transcript could be issued by 28 July, as this is the application deadline.

Thank you very much for your time and assistance.

Yours sincerely,
Brianna Wu
brianna.wu@example.com
+389 70 123 456

Semi-Formal Letter of Request

Subject: Request for Extension on Final Paper Submission

Dear Professor Lowe,

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to kindly request a short extension on the final paper for Academic Writing I, originally due on 17 May.

Due to unforeseen family obligations and overlapping deadlines in other courses, I am struggling to finalise the paper to the standard I aim for. I would be grateful if I could have an additional three days to complete and submit it by 20 May.

I understand the importance of meeting deadlines and assure you this request is made with respect for the course requirements. Thank you for considering my situation.

Kind regards,
David Stefanov
1st Year, English Department
Student ID: 2014/ENG/1408

Business Letter of Request

Subject: Request for Quotation: Office Furniture Supply

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing on behalf of BrightLeaf Consulting to request a quotation for the supply of ergonomic office furniture, including 15 adjustable desks and 20 task chairs.

Please include specifications, pricing (including bulk discounts if applicable), delivery timeframes, and warranty details. We are looking to place an order by the end of the month, so a response by 20 July would be appreciated.

Should you require further details, do not hesitate to contact me. We look forward to your offer.

Yours faithfully,
Katherine Wilkes
Operations Manager
BrightLeaf Consulting
+44 20 7946 0821
contact@brightleafconsulting.com

Academic Letter of Request

Subject: Request for Access to Research Materials on EFL Writing Practices

Dear Professor Whyte,

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to kindly request access to the unpublished materials and questionnaire you referenced during your recent seminar on EFL writing strategies.

As part of my final-year thesis on academic writing development among English majors, I believe your data would offer valuable insight into learner challenges and instructional approaches. If permitted, I would like to review the materials strictly for academic purposes and cite them appropriately, in accordance with university ethical guidelines.

Please let me know if you require a formal request from my supervisor or any additional documentation. I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to incorporate your work, and I assure you it will be used with full academic integrity.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Julia Filkova
BA in English Philology, Year 4
julia.filkova@email.com
Student ID: 2021/ENG/0458

10.5. Exercises

Exercise 15. Below is a scrambled version of a letter of request, with the paragraphs out of order. Rearrange the parts into the correct logical order and label each paragraph using these section headings: *Greeting; Purpose/Introduction; Background/Reason; Main Request; Polite Closing; Sign-Off.* Underline any linking phrases or expressions that helped you decide the order. Once you have appropriately rearranged the sections, think about the following points:

- Which paragraph gave you the most difficulty to place? Why?
- What transition words or phrases helped you find the logical flow?
- How would this structure change if the request were sent as an informal message?
- Is there anything you would add to make the request clearer or more convincing?

Scrambled Letter

(A) Thank you very much for your time and consideration. Please let me know if any additional information or documents are needed.

(B) I would greatly appreciate it if you could send the transcript directly to the admissions office at the address below by 25 July, as it is one of the key requirements for my application.

(C) I am writing to kindly request an official copy of my academic transcript. I recently applied for a master's programme, and the university requires sealed academic records for verification.

(D) Dear Registrar,

(E) Sincerely,
Toni Stefanovski

(F) I graduated in June 2025 with a BA in English Philology (Student ID: 456789). The receiving institution requires confirmation of my degree and grades to process the scholarship application.

10.6. Writing Tasks

Writing Task 10 - you are applying for a scholarship abroad and one of the required documents is an official academic transcript from your home university. Write a *formal letter of request* (200-250 words) to the university's Registrar's Office in which you state the reason for writing, clearly specify what document you need, include your full name, student ID, and programme, mention any relevant deadlines, indicate how you would like to receive the document (e.g., email, post, pick-up), and end with an appropriate closing and expression of gratitude.

Writing Task 11 - you are working on your final-year thesis, which focuses on students' perceptions of AI writing tools. You recently attended a talk by a professor who conducted a study on this topic and you would like to request access to their unpublished survey and, if possible, conduct a short interview with them. Write a *formal academic letter of request* (200-250 words) to the professor in which you introduce yourself (name, year of study, university), briefly describe your research topic and its relevance, explain why you are contacting them, specify what exactly you are requesting (e.g., survey, short interview), mention how the data will be used and offer any other ethical assurances, thank them, and offer to provide any additional information.

Writing Task 12 - as a student organiser of a department event, you are in charge of arranging the catering. Write a *business letter of request* (200-250 words) to a local catering company to request a quotation for an event scheduled for next month in which you introduce yourself and your role in the event, state the date, time, and location of the event, specify the number of attendees and the type of service required (e.g., buffet, vegetarian options), ask for a quotation with details about pricing, delivery, and setup, provide a deadline for when you need their response, and include contact information for follow-up.

Writing Task 13 - due to illness and overlapping assignments, you are unable to meet the submission deadline for your academic writing portfolio and you would like to request a short extension from your course instructor. Write a *semi-formal letter of request* (200-250 words) to your professor in which you greet the professor appropriately, state your reason for writing, briefly explain the circumstances, clearly request a specific extension, acknowledge the importance of deadlines and show responsibility, and close politely and professionally.

Peer feedback task:

Exchange your letter of request with a peer and then follow the steps below:

1. Read your peer's letter of request twice, once to form an overall impression and a second time to examine the details.

2. Complete the Letter of Request Writing Assessment Rubric (below) for your peer, assigning a score of 1, 3 or 5 to each criterion.

3. For each score awarded, write one or two sentences explaining your reasoning, citing specific examples from the letter of request.

4. Identify two or three aspects that were done well.

5. Suggest two or three concrete changes that could improve the letter of request.

6. Use polite, constructive language and avoid vague comments.

Useful language for peer feedback:

- *One strength of your letter of request is...*
- *This section is clear and well organised.*
- *Consider improving the section on...*
- *You could clarify this sentence by...*
- *The tone could be made more formal by...*
- *Try replacing "X" with a more specific example like...*

— *This part is effective because...*
— *Check for consistency in...*

Letter of Request Writing Assessment Rubric with Scoring and Comments

Criteria	Score (1/3/5)	Comments
Purpose and clarity Is the purpose of the request stated clearly and early in the letter? Is the request understandable and specific? Suggest any parts that need clarification.		
Tone and register Is the tone appropriate for the recipient (formal, semi-formal)? Mention if anything sounds too casual or overly stiff.		
Content completeness Are all necessary details included (e.g., what is being requested, why it is needed, when it is needed)? Is anything important missing (e.g., deadline or document type)?		
Structure and organisation Is the letter well-organised and logically structured? Does the flow support readability and coherence?		
Politeness and closing Is the request worded politely and respectfully? Is the closing courteous and appropriate?		
Grammar and mechanics Are there any grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors that affect clarity or tone?		
Overall strengths and suggestions What is one thing that works particularly well in the letter? What is one thing that could be improved or revised for clarity or impact?		

Table 33. Letter of Request Writing Assessment Rubric

11. Writing Letters of Complaint

A *letter of complaint* is a formal written communication used to express dissatisfaction or concern regarding a product, service, or experience. It serves a dual function: to inform the recipient of the issue and to seek a resolution or corrective action. This type of letter is an essential tool in professional, commercial, and institutional contexts as it provides a structured and documented way to raise concerns and address various problems in a respectful and constructive manner.

Being able to write an effective letter of complaint is a valuable skill in both personal and professional contexts. It requires clarity, objectivity, and a respectful tone, even when the writer is justifiably frustrated. When well-written, such letters can prompt timely responses, improvements in service, and in some cases, compensation. Beyond the immediate issue, they also contribute to larger systems of feedback and improvement across various sectors.

Becoming proficient in this genre is particularly valuable in our context, final-year EFL students, since it helps in achieving linguistic accuracy, it strengthens argumentation skills, and it fosters an awareness of appropriate tone and register in sensitive communication. These letters require the writer to be clear, concise, and objective, even when dealing with frustration or dissatisfaction. As such, they prepare students for real-world scenarios, academic, administrative, or professional, where complaints must be expressed in writing with formality, persuasive intent, and sensitivity to cultural and rhetorical conventions.

11.1. What is a Letter of Complaint?

A *letter of complaint* is a structured form of written communication intended to raise awareness of a problem and prompt a specific response or solution. Unlike casual verbal complaints, this type of writing formalises the grievance, offering a record that can be reviewed and acted upon.

While the content of letters of complaint varies depending on the context, consumer services, workplace matters, academic issues, the underlying structure remains consistent. The tone is firm yet respectful, and the language is precise. Effective letters of complaint avoid emotional language or vague descriptions, relying on facts and a coherent presentation of the situation. This balance of clarity, structure, and professionalism makes the letter of complaint a distinct and purposeful genre within formal written communication.

An important aspect of writing a letter of complaint is recognising the intended recipient and tailoring the message accordingly. Whether the letter

is addressed to a company, institution, or individual, the content should reflect an understanding of the recipient's role and authority to respond. Equally important is providing clear, factual support for the complaint, such as dates, documentation, or specific examples, which helps establish credibility and makes the request more persuasive. When purpose and audience are taken into account, the letter becomes a more effective problem-solving tool rather than merely a channel for expressing frustration.

11.2. Structure of a Letter of Complaint

A well-organised structure is crucial to the effectiveness of a letter of complaint. The recipient of the letter must be able to understand the issue quickly, follow the logic of the complaint, and identify what action is being requested. For this reason, letters of complaint usually follow a clear sequence: *introduction, explanation of the issue, supporting details, proposed resolution,* and *closing remarks*. Each section plays a distinct role in guiding the reader from problem to solution, while maintaining a formal and respectful tone throughout. The Table below provides a visual representation of the structure of a letter of complaint.

Section	Purpose	What to include	Sample phrases
Introduction	States the reason for writing and identifies the issue	Reference to product/service/situation; brief summary of the problem	I am writing to express my dissatisfaction with... I would like to raise a concern regarding...
Description of the problem	Provides a clear explanation of what went wrong	Specific details (what happened, when, where, who was involved, etc.)	On [date], I purchased... but unfortunately... The issue began when...
Supporting details	Strengthens the complaint with evidence	Receipts, reference/order numbers, photos, previous emails, relevant policies, screenshots	Enclosed/attached is a copy of... I have also included evidence to support my claim...
Requested action	Clearly states what the writer expects as a resolution	Refund, repair, replacement, apology, or procedural change	I would appreciate it if you could... I kindly request a full refund/replacement...
Closing	Ends the letter professionally and politely	Request for a timely response; contact information; expression of thanks or hope	I look forward to your prompt response. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Table 34. Structure of a letter of complaint

11.3. Types of Letters of Complaint

While the core structure and purpose of a letter of complaint remain consistent, the context in which it is written can vary significantly. Different situations require different approaches in tone, content, and level of formality, and recognising the type of letter of complaint being written is important as it helps the writer tailor the message to the specific audience and objective. Whether addressing a company, institution, employer, or public authority, each type of letter requires the writer to adjust their focus while still maintaining clarity, professionalism, and a constructive tone.

Below is a brief explanation of the different types of letters of complaint that exist.

Consumer letter of complaint

This type of letter is typically addressed to businesses or service providers, and deals with issues such as faulty products, poor service, delivery delays, or overcharging. The tone should be formal but customer-focused, aiming to resolve the issue clearly and professionally.

Workplace letter of complaint

This type of letter is sent to employers, HR departments, or supervisors, and may cover topics such as harassment, unsafe working conditions, unfair treatment, or contract violations. It must maintain a formal, respectful, and procedural tone, often following internal protocols.

Academic letter of complaint

This type of letter is directed at teachers, department heads, or university administrators, and often involves grading disputes, exam irregularities, poor teaching, or institutional mismanagement. The tone is formal and evidence-based, often requiring clear documentation and justification.

Public or civic letter of complaint

This type of letter is sent to local councils, public offices, or utility providers, and it deals with public service failures, safety hazards, or policy-related concerns. The tone should remain formal and polite, but it can also be assertive when necessary to communicate urgency or public interest.

Third-party letter of complaint

This type of letter is written on behalf of someone else (such as a parent, guardian, or legal representative), and it addresses issues that affect a dependent, minor, or client. The tone must be formal, clear, and objective, with a focus on facts and the affected individual's best interests.

11.4. Sample Letters of Complaint

Below are five sample letters of complaint, each representing a different context.

Consumer Letter of Complaint

To: Customer Service Department

Subject: Defective Wireless Headphones – Order #782145

Dear Sir/Madam,
I am writing to express my dissatisfaction with the wireless headphones I purchased from your website on 12 June 2025 (Order #782145). Upon first use, the device failed to charge properly and would not pair with my phone despite multiple attempts.
I have enclosed a copy of the receipt and pictures showing the product and packaging. As the item is under warranty, I kindly request a full replacement or refund.
I look forward to your prompt response.

Yours faithfully,
Evan Marten

Workplace Letter of Complaint

To: Human Resources Department

Subject: Formal Complaint Regarding Unsafe Working Conditions

Dear HR Manager,
I am writing to formally report a safety issue in the warehouse area of our facility. Several shelves are unstable and have not been secured properly, posing a serious risk of injury.
I first raised this concern verbally with my supervisor on 3 July 2025, but no action has been taken. I urge you to address this matter immediately before any harm occurs.
Please confirm receipt of this letter and advise me on any next steps.

Yours sincerely,
Philip Anderson
Logistics Assistant

Academic Letter of Complaint

To: Head of English Department

Subject: Concern Regarding Final Grade for Academic Writing Course

Dear Professor Ionescu,

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to request a review of my final grade in the Academic Writing course (ENG407). The grade posted does not reflect my performance across the semester, and I believe an error may have occurred in the calculation.

I have attached a breakdown of my assignments and their respective marks, along with screenshots from our online platform. I would be grateful if you could review the assessment and inform me of any discrepancies.

Thank you for your time and understanding.

Kind regards,
Dimitri Kostas
Final-year student, English Language and Literature
Student ID: 2012/ENG/1410

Public/Civic Letter of Complaint

To: Department of Public Works, Cork County

Subject: Potholes on Bay Street

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing as a resident of Bay Street to raise a concern about the numerous potholes that have made the road unsafe for both drivers and pedestrians. The issue has persisted for months and is worsening due to recent rainfall.

I kindly urge your department to prioritise repairs in this area. Several residents have already reported damage to their vehicles, and the situation poses a growing safety hazard.

Thank you for your attention. I look forward to seeing improvements soon.

Respectfully,
Alexa Simmons

Third-Party Letter of Complaint

To: School Administration, ABS International School

Subject: Concern Regarding Unaddressed Bullying Incident

Dear Principal Hood,

I am writing on behalf of my son, Luke Williams (Year 8), to raise a concern about a bullying incident that occurred last week. Luke has reported repeated verbal harassment from a classmate, and despite informing his form teacher, no action appears to have been taken.

I respectfully request that this matter be investigated promptly and handled according to the school's anti-bullying policy. We hope the school will take appropriate steps to ensure a safe and respectful learning environment.

Yours sincerely,
Dave Williams

11.5. Exercises

Exercise 16. Below are five opening sentences that you need to rate in terms of appropriacy of register, from 1 (too informal or aggressive) to 5 (highly appropriate and professional), briefly explain your reasoning, and then identify the most likely context (e.g., consumer, academic, workplace, civic, etc.).

1. Hey, I had a really bad experience at your place.

2. I would like to lodge a formal complaint regarding the service I received.

3. Your staff completely ignored me, which is ridiculous.

4. I am writing to express concern about a recent incident involving your service.

5. This is unacceptable, and I expect someone to fix it now.

Exercise 17. Revise the sentences below to make them more appropriate for a formal letter of complaint, focusing on tone, clarity, and formality.

1. You guys seriously dropped the ball with this one.

_____ .

2. I can't believe how bad the service was.

_____ .

3. Give me my refund ASAP.

_____ .

4. I'm really annoyed that no one did anything about it.

_____ .

5. It's your fault, not mine, so fix it.

_____ .

Exercise 18. Read the excerpt below and identify at least three weaknesses in tone, structure, or language. Then, rewrite the message using formal, polite, and professional language suitable for a letter of complaint.

"Hi, I got really bad service yesterday in your shop. The person working was super rude and didn't help me. You guys should do something about this. I want a refund or I'll post about it online."

11.6. Writing Tasks

Writing Task 14 - you recently stayed at one of a chain of large hotels and encountered a number of problems during your stay. Write a letter of complaint (250-300 words) to the company's head office detailing the problems you had, describing what happened when you complained to the hotel staff and suggesting ways the company could improve its service.

Writing Task 15 - you recently travelled to school by train, and were appalled because the train was dirty and the canteen facilities were poor. Due to work on the tracks, your train failed to arrive at its destination on time, which made you late for class. Write a letter of complaint (250-300 words) to the railway company, expressing your views and stating what you expect them to do about the problem.

Writing Task 16 - you are a university student and you recently submitted a final assignment via the school platform, but it failed to upload due

to a technical error and, as such, you received a zero. Write a letter of complaint (250-300 words) to the course instructor, where you will include a description of the issue, a timeline of events, supporting evidence (e.g. screenshot, error message), as well as a requested resolution.

Peer feedback task:

Exchange your letter of complaint with a peer and then follow the steps below:

1. Read your peer's letter of complaint twice, once to form an overall impression and a second time to examine the details.

2. Complete the Letter of Complaint Writing Assessment Rubric (below) for your peer, assigning a score of 1, 3 or 5 to each criterion.

3. For each score awarded, write one or two sentences explaining your reasoning, citing specific examples from the letter of complaint.

4. Identify two or three aspects that were done well.

5. Suggest two or three concrete changes that could improve the letter of complaint.

6. Use polite, constructive language and avoid vague comments.

Useful language for peer feedback:

— *One strength of your letter of complaint is...*
— *This section is clear and well organised.*
— *Consider improving the section on...*
— *You could clarify this sentence by...*
— *The tone could be made more formal by...*
— *Try replacing "X" with a more specific example like...*
— *This part is effective because...*
— *Check for consistency in...*

Letter of Complaint Writing Assessment Rubric
with Scoring and Comments

Criteria	Score (1/3/5)	Comments
Purpose and clarity Is the purpose of the complaint stated clearly and early in the letter? Is the issue understandable and specific? Suggest any parts that need clarification.		

Criteria	Score (1/3/5)	Comments
Tone and register Is the tone formal, respectful, and appropriate for a complaint? Mention if anything sounds too emotional, aggressive, or too casual.		
Content completeness Are all relevant details included (e.g., what happened, when, where, and what outcome is expected)? Is anything important missing?		
Structure and organisation Is the letter logically structured with clear sections (introduction, body, conclusion)? Does it flow smoothly?		
Politeness and professionalism Is the complaint expressed in a polite and professional manner? Is the closing courteous and appropriate?		
Grammar and mechanics Are there any grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors that affect clarity or tone?		
Overall strengths and suggestions What is one thing that works particularly well in the letter? What is one thing that could be improved or revised for clarity, tone, or impact?		

Table 35. Letter of Complaint Writing Assessment Rubric

Part III

Academic Paper Writing in the Humanities: Research, Structure, Style

12. Introduction To Academic Paper Writing

Academic writing is an important skill for success in higher education, and, in fact, in any field, despite the fact that many written assignments are seen as unnecessarily challenging, often considered to be a form of torture, in addition to the regular tortures students are assigned to complete. The basic essentials are knowing how to produce grammatically correct sentences that make sense, presenting a clear, logical, and convincing argument, possessing critical thinking skills, and displaying them through critical writing, which is a practice of thinking by means of which ideas are discovered, examined, compared, evaluated, refined, and promoted.

12.1. Purpose and Characteristics of Academic Papers

Academic papers in the humanities focus on complex issues through critical interpretation, and present objective findings. These papers rely heavily on argumentation supported by textual analysis and scholarly evidence. A strong humanities paper presents an original, defensible thesis developed through close reading, contextual interpretation, and theoretical reflection. The primary purpose of such a paper is to demonstrate understanding of a topic, offer a perspective grounded in evidence, and contribute to academic discourse. Characteristics of effective humanities papers include:

- a clearly articulated and arguable thesis,
- logical organisation and thematic coherence,
- use of primary sources (e.g., literary texts, artworks, cultural artefacts),
- engagement with secondary sources (e.g., scholarly articles, theoretical frameworks),
- a formal academic tone and style, and
- proper referencing and citation.

12.2. Challenges for EFL Writers in Academic Contexts

In the writing of an academic paper, students may be faced with various linguistic and rhetorical challenges, such as the following:

Lexical complexity: academic texts require precise and abstract vocabulary.*Grammatical precision:* accurate use of articles, complex sentence structures, passive constructions, and cohesive devices all play a role in how a text sounds.

Formality and tone: it is quite easy to unintentionally and sub-consciously slip into conversational or informal language (such as, "The book

talks about...") rather than academic phrasing (for example, "The text explores...").

Rhetorical conventions: students need to know how to build arguments that follow English-language academic logic: stating the thesis early, supporting it paragraph by paragraph, and using cautious language (hedging).

Source use: distinguishing between paraphrasing, summarising, and quoting may often cause confusion and uncertainty and, at times, EFL students may even patchwrite, i.e. substitute synonyms without fully restructuring or citing properly.

Cognitive load: managing all of the previously mentioned points while also developing content, analysing texts, and applying theory creates a high cognitive load, which can have an impact on fluency and cohesion.

12.3. Genre Expectations in the Humanities

Humanities disciplines assign a range of academic genres, each with its own rhetorical features and expectations. The most common include:

Argumentative essay:
– Focus: Takes a clear stance on a question or issue.
– Structure: Introduction with thesis → argument sections → counterargument (optional) → conclusion.
– Example: "To what extent is *Hamlet* a political play?"

Close reading/textual analysis:
– Focus: Examines a specific passage or textual element in depth.
– Structure: Introduction → detailed analysis → interpretive conclusion.
– Example: Analysing Gothic imagery in a scene from *Frankenstein.*

Comparative essay:
– Focus: Juxtaposes two texts to examine a shared theme, technique, or historical context.
– Structure: Point-by-point or block format.
– Example: Comparing representations of exile in *The Odyssey* and *The Tempest.*

Theoretical/conceptual essay:
– Focus: Applies a theoretical lens (e.g., feminism, Marxism, postcolonialism) to interpret a text or concept.
– Structure: Introduces theory → applies to case study → interprets results.
– Example: Applying feminist theory to *The Handmaid's Tale.*

The Table below offers a visual representation of the genre types, with relevant information on their main focus, the evidence used in each, as well as points on their structure. Understanding these genre conventions will help students to write with purpose and precision, choosing the appropriate structure and language for each task.

Genre type	Main focus	Evidence used	Structure highlights
Argumentative essay	Defend a claim	Primary + secondary sources	Thesis-driven, logical progression
Close reading/ textual analysis	Analyse a text closely	Primary sources only	Textual focus, deep interpretation
Comparative essay	Explore similarities/ differences	Primary (2+) + secondary sources	Thematic or block organisation
Theoretical/ conceptual essay	Apply theory to a text/concept	Primary + theoretical sources	Context-theory-application format

Table 36. Genre features

13. Topic Development And Research Questions

Developing a research paper in the humanities, particularly in fields such as *linguistics* (e.g., semantics, sociolinguistics, syntax, applied linguistics) and *literature* (e.g., narrative voice, symbolism, genre studies, postcolonial theory), begins with identifying a topic that is not only relevant and interesting but also feasible for in-depth analysis. Unlike scientific writing, where research questions often stem from empirical data, humanities research requires students to come up with interpretive, analytical, and often theoretical questions.

This section will take a closer look at the initial stages of paper development, including how to move from broad themes to focused, researchable ideas, how to identify meaningful gaps in existing scholarship, and how to refine given prompts into coherent, academically grounded questions. Special attention is given to narrowing the scope and ensuring relevance, whether the paper focuses on metaphor, code-switching, syntactic variation, lexical semantics, narrative techniques, literary symbolism, or discourse markers in context.

13.1. From General Topic to Researchable Idea

Developing a strong academic paper begins with identifying a topic of personal or academic interest and refining it into a manageable, researchable idea. In the humanities, a researchable idea is interpretive, it asks a *how-* or *why-question*, not just a *what-* or *who-question*.

> *Example of progression* (*semantics focus*)*:*
> – General topic: Language and meaning
> – Focused idea: Metaphor in political discourse
> – Researchable question: How do metaphors construct ideological meaning in Macedonian/American parliamentary debates?

This can be visually represented with the following narrowing funnel:

Broad theme → focus area → specific domain/corpus → analytical question

In both literature and linguistics, students would need to begin with a broad interest, such as "identity," "language change," or "power and resistance," and then develop it into a manageable, researchable paper topic. As such, in literature, a student might move from the broad theme of "identity" to analysing how racial identity is portrayed in postcolonial novels. In linguistics, the same theme could lead to a study of code-switching as an expression of identity among bilingual speakers. In both instances, however, the key is to connect the topic to a specific phenomenon, author, theory, or dataset that allows for in-depth research and exploration.

The Table below provides literature- and linguistics-related examples of topic narrowing that would evolve into a more focused, researchable idea.

Field	General topic	Focused researchable idea
Literature	Gender	The construction of masculinity in Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*
Linguistics	Language change	Vowel shift patterns in the Cockney dialect over two generations

Table 37. Examples of topic narrowing

13.2. Identifying Gaps and Formulating Questions

Academic writing contributes to ongoing scholarly discourse. Identifying a *research gap* is of great importance because it means recognising that something is under-explored, contradictory, or absent in current research, which can be potentially looked at in greater detail.

The Table below illustrates the signals that indicate a research gap, with a semantics-focus, with a relevant example.

Signal type	Example
Underexplored topic	Few studies on conceptual metaphor in Balkan political discourse
Conflicting views	Diverging interpretations of polysemy in legal language
Outdated readings	Early work on lexical fields lacks reference to multimodal texts (e.g., memes)

Table 38. Signals of a research gap

Effective research questions are open-ended, feasible, and directly tied to academic conversations in the field. In order to classify a research question as good, it needs to be *specific* (focused on a meaning-related linguistic feature), *analytical* (requires interpretation), *arguable* (open to scholarly debate), and *grounded* (connected to a corpus or example-driven approach).

Poor: What is lexical ambiguity?
Better: How does lexical ambiguity function rhetorically in English-language political satire?

Thus, after narrowing a topic, students must identify what has not been fully addressed in existing research. In literature, this might involve offering a new reading of a well-known work using an under-explored theoretical lens (e.g., eco-criticism in *King Lear*). In linguistics, it may mean exploring an under-researched speech community or applying a new theoretical approach to familiar data.

In this context, an effective research question in literature might be "How does narrative fragmentation reflect psychological trauma in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*?", whereas in linguistics it might be "How do Macedonian-English bilinguals use code-switching to negotiate professional identity in workplace settings?"

13.3. Working with Prompts and Assignments

University writing tasks are often based on prompts provided by professors. In both fields, linguistics and literature, the prompt may include a theme, a required set of readings, or an expectation for applying a specific theory. Students need to interpret these requirements, ask clarifying questions, and ensure that their research question stays within the scope of the assignment.

When prompts are given, students need to be able to turn the general instructions into a concrete research question. This can be done through a *prompt deconstruction,* where the task is identified (e.g., examined, compared, evaluated), the various features are isolated, and the context or text type is determined.

For example, if we have the following (linguistics-related) prompt: "Discuss the role of figurative language in environmental communication", the rephrased research question might be: "How do metaphors shape public understanding of climate change in UN policy documents?"

In addition, a prompt connected to an analysis in language variation in a social context might have a rephrased research question of: "How does vowel pronunciation vary among older and younger speakers in urban vs rural areas of Chicago?"

On the other hand, in the following (literature-related) prompt: "Discuss the role of space and confinement in 19th-century fiction", the rephrased research question might be: "In what ways does domestic space function as a symbol of mental confinement in *The Yellow Wallpaper*?"

13.4. Narrowing Scope and Relevance in Humanities Topics

Students in both literature and linguistics often struggle to limit their scope. A paper that tries to analyse five novels, for example, or all aspects of bilingualism is unlikely to be successful. Instead, students should limit themselves to one or two texts or a clearly defined linguistic phenomenon. Relevance should also be justified, so we may think about why the given question or topic matter to the academic field, to social contexts, or to an ongoing scholarly debate.

A topic, any topic, can easily become too abstract or too broad, and in order to avoid this, it is important that the research questions are grounded in specific data, frameworks, or contexts. A variety of narrowing strategies can be used here, such as focusing on a single phenomenon (e.g., in semantics: metaphor, synonymy, entailment), applying one theoretical model (e.g., frame semantics, componential analysis), and using a defined corpus (e.g., TED talks, legal rulings, academic essays).

We may illustrate this with the following (semantics-related) example:

Too broad → Meaning in media
Better → Figurative language in advertising
Just right → How do evaluative adjectives create persuasive meaning in Macedonian and English food advertisements (compare and contrast)?

The progression needs to be:

Broad area → Specific theme → Text/data → Theory → Research question

In literature this might look something like this:

Trauma → Memory → Mrs. Dalloway → Psychoanalysis → How does Clarissa process post-war trauma through internal monologue?

In linguistics it could be:

Multilingualism → Code-switching → Urban teens in London → Identity theory → How do urban bilingual teens use code-switching to express social alignment?

Students can also ask themselves the following relevance-check questions to make sure they are on the right path:

– Can I identify clear examples of the phenomenon?
– Is the theory I am applying relevant to the data?
– Is there room for interpretation and argument?

14. Engaging With Sources

After narrowing down a focused research question, academic success in the humanities depends on finding and engaging critically with relevant sources. In linguistics-related research, this often involves navigating theoretical literature, identifying key studies on phenomena, and selecting authentic language data from corpora, fieldwork, or recorded speech.

At this stage, it is crucial that students distinguish between *primary sources* (language examples, corpora, interview transcripts) and *secondary sources* (theoretical analyses and peer-reviewed articles).

The section that follows offers some practical strategies for selecting reliable sources, reading complex academic texts, synthesising arguments, and citing materials effectively, with a special emphasis on avoiding common mistakes such as superficial paraphrasing or overuse of quotations.

14.1. Finding and Selecting Appropriate Sources

Research requires careful selection of both primary and secondary sources. *Primary sources* in linguistics, for example, may include corpora, interviews, or recorded natural speech, while *secondary sources* would involve theoretical literature such as peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and conference papers. Scholarly materials from databases like *JSTOR, LLBA* or *Google Scholar* should be given priority.

The two Tables below offer a brief visual representation of the different types of sources, with a linguistics focus and a literature focus, respectively.

Source type	Example (linguistics-related)	Use in paper
Primary sources	Linguistic interviews, corpus data, speech recordings, student writing samples	Direct evidence for linguistic analysis
Secondary sources	Journal articles, books, and theoretical papers on syntax, code-switching, semantics	Provide theoretical background and support for analysis

Table 39. Source classification (linguistics focus)

Source Type	Example (literature-related)	Use in paper
Primary sources	Novels, poems, plays, short stories, autobiographies, letters by authors	Core texts to be analysed and interpreted
Secondary sources	Scholarly articles or books on literary theory, criticism, or context	Provide critical perspectives, support interpretation

Table 40. Source classification (literature focus)

14.2. Reading Strategies for Complex Texts

Scholarly texts in the fields of linguistics or literature, whatever their focus, can be dense and highly technical, and for this reason it is crucial that students read with a purpose to extract relevant information.

The Table below provides some reading strategies that will help students tackle complex tasks, with tips on how to achieve this.

Strategy	Purpose	Tip
Skimming	Get general idea	Read abstract, introduction, conclusion
Scanning	Locate key terms	Focus on headings and first sentences of paragraphs
Annotating	Engage critically	Underline definitions, theories, counterarguments
Summarising	Retain key points	Write 1-2 sentences per section in your own words

Table 41. Reading strategies

14.3. Critical Engagement and Thematic Synthesis

The notions of *critical engagement* and *thematic synthesis* are tightly bound together, especially in the context of academic reading and writing. *Critical engagement* is the *mindset*; it refers to how one interacts with sources: questioning, evaluating, comparing viewpoints, identifying patterns, reflecting on their meaning, validity and relevance, and linking the source ideas to one's own claims. It is not passive reading, as it is analytical, interpretive, and selective.

Thus, when a writer critically engages with a source, they ask what the author's purpose is, what assumptions are being made, how that relates to other encountered ideas, and so on.

With a linguistics focus, this may look something like the excerpt below:

While Chomsky (1995) views syntactic structures as biologically determined, Halliday (2004) focuses on their function in meaning-making. In language acquisition studies, these perspectives frame different understandings of early syntax development.

A literature-related example, on the other hand, is illustrated in the following excerpt:

Whereas Gilbert and Gubar (1979) interpret the "madwoman in the attic" as a symbol of patriarchal repression, Moi (1985) critiques this reading for its essentialist view of female identity. When analysing Bertha Mason in *Jane Eyre*, it is crucial to balance psychoanalytic symbolism with a poststructuralist sensitivity to language and representation.

Thematic synthesis, on the other hand, is the *method*. It involves grouping similar findings, arguments, or perspectives and weaving them into a structured whole. Instead of summarising each source separately, thematic synthesis clusters insights under shared themes, comparing viewpoints across sources, and drawing broader conclusions, thus helping to build a coherent narrative or argument. It is commonly used in qualitative research, systematic reviews, and literature-based inquiry, including in fields like education, linguistics, literature, and cultural studies.

Effective thematic synthesis cannot occur without critical engagement, and in order for meaningful themes to be identified, there first needs to be an evaluation of the significance of what each source contributes, then a comparison and contrast of the viewpoints, and finally a decision needs to be made as to which sources are central, peripheral, or conflicting.

In conclusion, critical engagement enables thematic synthesis; the former is the analytical lens, the latter is the organising tool, working together to transform a collection of sources into a coherent, meaningful synthesis that goes beyond description to interpretation and insight.

14.4. Integrating Quotations, Paraphrases, and Citations

Effective academic writing requires more than just citing sources, it requires that external material be purposefully integrated into the writer's own argument. Inserting quotes or paraphrases without explanation or analysis needs to be avoided, as this disrupts the flow and weakens the argumentation. Instead, the evidence should be blended smoothly into the discussion, with sources directly supporting whatever claim is being made.

In linguistics, quoting should serve to clarify or support a theoretical point, not simply to restate it. For example:

Poor → "Subject-auxiliary inversion occurs in questions" (Radford 2009).
Better → As Radford (2009) explains, subject-auxiliary inversion is a key syntactic process in interrogative formation, especially in English *wh*-questions.

The second version above integrates the source smoothly and highlights its relevance to the analysis, providing both context and interpretation.

Likewise, in literary analysis, quotations should be embedded within the commentary to show how and why they are significant. For example:

Poor → "The yellow wallpaper symbolizes madness" (Gilman 14).
Better → As Gilman (14) illustrates through the narrator's fixation on the wallpaper, it becomes a metaphor for the protagonist's descent into mental instability and her rebellion against imposed domestic confinement.

This revision in the second version not only incorporates the quotation into a larger sentence but also unpacks its thematic significance.

As to what citation and formatting style should be used, MLA or APA, it may be noted that the choice depends on the disciplinary focus. As such, MLA is the preferred style for literature and the broader humanities, such as cultural studies, and language arts, as it emphasises page numbers, primary texts, and close reading of language and form, and it is ideal when citing specific passages from novels, plays, or poems. APA, on the other hand, is most commonly used in linguistics, education, psychology, and the social sciences, as it emphasises dates, research studies, and empirical evidence. It supports data-driven and theoretical discussions, which are common in linguistics-focused writing.

14.5. Avoiding Patchwriting and Overreliance on Sources

In academic writing, it is important to distinguish between *original text, patchwriting*, and a *proper paraphrase*. For example, the following original sentence: "Subject-auxiliary inversion is typical in English questions," may have its patchwritten version look something like: "Auxiliary inversion is common in English questions." This version is too close to the original in both wording and structure and does not demonstrate the writer's own understanding. A proper paraphrase would be the following: "English questions often exhibit subject-auxiliary inversion, where the auxiliary verb precedes the subject." This version is better because it rephrases the idea accurately while using the writer's own language and sentence structure.

Another example would be the following: "The yellow wallpaper represents the narrator's madness." If the student repeats the sentence exactly or changes only one or two words, such as in: "The yellow wallpaper shows the madness of the narrator", this would not be considered a paraphrase but direct repetition, which must be quoted and cited. A proper paraphrase would involve rewording and reinterpreting the idea, such as: "In Gilman's story, the wallpaper gradually comes to symbolise the narrator's mental breakdown and her growing detachment from reality."

To ensure effective source integration and avoid an overreliance on external material, students can ask themselves whether more than 40% of their paragraphs are directly tied to sources. If the answer is in the affirmative, then balance is needed. They can also consider whether they have added an original interpretation after each citation, since simply presenting what others have said is not enough; analysis must follow. In addition, they may check to see whether a variety of verbs have been used to introduce each source, which would help to avoid repetition and improve the clarity through precise attribution.

All in all, using proper paraphrasing techniques and maintaining a strong authorial voice not only avoids plagiarism but also demonstrates students' critical thinking and academic maturity.

15. Structuring The Academic Paper

A well-structured academic paper in the humanities is essential for presenting arguments clearly and persuasively. Whether the topic is linguistics- or literature-related, the organisation of ideas should act as a guide through the research question, the development of the argument, and the analysis of the evidence.

Different types of structure are appropriate for different research aims: an *argumentative essay* builds towards a strong central claim; a *thematic/analytical structure* explores recurring motifs across texts or datasets; a *comparative structure* evaluates two works, authors, or phenomena in relation to each other.

15.1. Common Structures in Humanities Papers

The Table below presents an outline of the most common structures used in humanities writing, as well as relevant examples to help in the planning and drafting stages.

Structure type	Description	Example topic (literature)	Example topic (linguistics)
Argumentative-essay structure	Presents a clear thesis and builds an argument through logical progression	Argue that *Hamlet* reflects existentialist themes	Argue that gendered language in political speeches reinforces bias
Thematic/analytical structure	Organised around recurring themes or concepts, often cross-textual	Explore themes of surveillance in dystopian novels	Analyse types of metaphor used in environmental discourse
Comparative structure	Juxtaposes two or more texts or phenomena to highlight similarities/ differences	Compare narrative voice in *Wuthering Heights* and *Jane Eyre*	Compare vowel shifts in urban vs rural dialects among speakers in New York

Table 42. Types of academic paper structure in humanities writing

15.2. Outlining the Paper

Outlining is a crucial stage in the writing process that helps students structure their argument, organise their evidence, and ensure a coherent flow of ideas before drafting the full paper. A strong outline acts as a roadmap for the entire paper, ensuring that each paragraph contributes directly to the research question and central thesis.

In both literature and linguistics, outlines can vary slightly based on paper structure, but they usually include the following key components:

Introduction, which contains a hook or context-setting statement, a statement of the research question or problem, a thesis statement, and a brief mention of the paper's structure.

Body paragraphs (typically 3-5), which consist of a topic sentence, supporting evidence or analysis, as well as an explanation of how the evidence supports the claim, and a transitional phrase or sentence to the next paragraph.

Conclusion, where the thesis is restated (in different words), the key findings are summarised, and the broader implications or future research questions are discussed.

In that context, *an example outline of a literature-related paper* may look something like this:

Introduction: Introduce postcolonial theory and the novel *Things Fall Apart.*

Body Paragraph 1: Colonial language and cultural erasure.

Body Paragraph 2: Resistance through narrative voice.

Body Paragraph 3: Postcolonial identity and hybridity.

Conclusion: Reinforce the thesis and reflect on postcolonial storytelling.

On the other hand, *an example outline of a linguistics-related paper* may look something like this:

Introduction: Present the topic of gendered speech styles in British media.

Body Paragraph 1: Linguistic markers of gender bias.

Body Paragraph 2: Media representation and stereotypes.

Body Paragraph 3: Impact on language perception and identity.

Conclusion: Restate central argument and suggest future avenues of research.

Completing a detailed outline before writing improves the overall logical coherence of the paper and it allows students to make sure that all the analytical elements have been addressed.

15.3. Structural Components of a Full Academic Paper

While humanities papers vary in structure depending on their purpose and discipline, many research-oriented academic papers follow a more formalised structure, which facilitates the logical flow of ideas and allows the disciplinary conventions to be met.

15.3.1. Overview of Standard Sections

A typical academic paper often includes the following parts:

– *Title page:* Includes the paper title, author's name, institutional affiliation, course, instructor, and date.

- *Abstract:* A concise summary of the paper's content (usually 150-250 words), including research aim, methods, findings, and implications.
- *Keywords:* Usually listed beneath the abstract (5-7 keywords), which highlight key concepts such as "code-switching," "postcolonial identity," or "semantic shifts"; these help databases and readers identify the core topics.
- *Introduction:* Structured to move from general to specific; it introduces the research problem, background, purpose, and often the thesis.
- *Methods:* Describes how the research was conducted, including data sources and instruments (e.g., interview protocols, corpora).
- *Results:* Presents findings clearly, often using figures, tables, or charts for quantitative or qualitative data.
- *Discussion:* Interprets the results in light of the research question and literature.
- *Conclusion and Recommendations:* Restates the thesis, synthesises insights, and may offer practical or theoretical implications.
- *References:* A complete list of cited sources in the appropriate academic style (APA or MLA).
- *Appendices* (*if applicable*)*:* Includes extended data like surveys, transcripts, or supplementary visuals.

Visually, the paper structure flow would be represented in the following way:

Title page → Abstract and Keywords → Introduction → Methods → Results → Discussion → Conclusion → References → Appendices

This format typically follows a *general-to-specific-to-general* pattern. The *introduction* narrows from a broad context to a specific thesis. The *methods and results* are highly specific, while the *discussion* and *conclusion* generalise again, reflecting on the broader meaning.

15.3.2. Abstract and Keywords

The *abstract* is one of the most important components of an academic paper. It is often the first (and sometimes the only) part that readers, reviewers, or database searchers will read. A well-written abstract can determine whether the rest of the paper is read at all. It should be concise, informative, and self-contained.

The importance of the abstract is set in several aspects. First, it gives the reader an immediate sense of the scope, direction, and quality of the paper. Second, abstracts are indexed in databases, so including relevant terminology increases visibility and accessibility. Finally, it is an effective screening tool as in academic research, scholars often read a number of abstracts to determine which full papers are worth their attention.

The length of an abstract is usually 150-250 words, depending on the style guide, while its format is a single paragraph, with no citations or abbreviations, technical language, footnotes, or undefined acronyms. The *present tense* is used for conclusions and general statements, while the *past tense* is used for methods or actions taken.

The Table below offers the elements that a well-structured abstract includes.

Component	Purpose	Example phrase
Research topic	Sets the context for the reader	"This paper investigates the representation..."
Research purpose	Clarifies the aim or main question	"The aim is to analyse how..."
Methodology	Briefly describes how the study was conducted	"Using a qualitative analysis of..."
Key findings	Highlights major discoveries or results	"Findings indicate that..."
Implications/ conclusion	Notes the significance or impact of the study	"These results suggest a need for..."

Table 43. Elements of a well-structured abstract

The following Table provides a comparison between a weak and a strong abstract.

Feature	Weak abstract	Strong abstract
Clarity	"This paper talks about how people use language in media."	"This paper examines metaphorical framing in climate change reporting using corpus-based methods."
Specificity	"Some articles are analysed and a few conclusions are made."	"A corpus of 250 news articles is analysed using Conceptual Metaphor Theory and concordance tools."

Feature	Weak abstract	Strong abstract
Findings	"The findings are interesting and show different results."	"Findings show ideological variation in metaphor use, with right-leaning outlets favouring defence metaphors."
Relevance	"This is useful for people who want to know more."	"The study contributes to research on discourse framing, environmental communication, and semantics."

Table 44. Comparison between a weak and a strong abstract

In APA style, the abstract appears on a separate page after the title page, with the heading "Abstract" centred. MLA style typically does not require an abstract unless specifically requested by the instructor or institution.

Keywords are also an essential part of an academic paper's visibility and accessibility because they function as search terms that help index the work in academic databases (e.g., *Google Scholar, JSTOR, LLBA*). Effective keywords not only summarise the content of the paper but also reflect its disciplinary relevance and methodological approach. Choosing appropriate keywords is crucial as it improves scholarly communication and demonstrates academic literacy.

Effective keywords are *relevant*, in that they accurately represent the core concepts of the paper; *specific*, in that instead of vague terms (e.g., "language"), more focused ones (e.g., "semantic shifts") are used; *discipline-aligned*, in that terminology common in the given academic field (e.g., "narrative voice," "code-switching," "intertextuality") is used; and *balanced*, in that both theoretical and empirical terms, if applicable, are used.

The abstract below (150 words) is an example of an effective abstract with relevant and appropriate keywords.

This study examines how metaphorical framing in news media influences public perception of climate change. Drawing on the Conceptual Metaphor Theory and a corpus of 250 English-language news articles published between 2018 and 2022, the research identifies dominant metaphors used to describe climate-related phenomena. The methodology involves qualitative analysis supported by concordance software, focusing on metaphor clusters such as "climate battle," "tipping point," and "carbon footprint." Results indicate a strong preference for metaphors evoking conflict and catastrophe, with notable variation depending on the publication's ideological orientation. Right-leaning sources favour metaphors of defence and economic threat, while left-

leaning outlets employ imagery of urgency and irreversible damage. The study argues that such framing strategies contribute to polarised interpretations and emotional responses in the readership. It concludes by suggesting that awareness of metaphorical framing could improve science communication and media literacy. These findings hold relevance for researchers in semantics, discourse analysis, environmental communication, and education.

Keywords: metaphorical framing, climate change, Conceptual Metaphor Theory, ideological bias, environmental communication, media literacy

15.3.3. Introduction Section

The *introduction* consists of three main parts and is usually written in the *present tense*. First, it offers a *presentation of the problem or research inquiry*, where the issue or question is clearly identified and the relevant background is provided. Second is the *purpose and focus of the paper*, which states the paper's aim and sometimes the thesis. Finally comes the *overview of main arguments*, which briefly previews the structure of the paper.

The introduction of an academic paper essentially serves as the reader's first point of entry into the research. For this reason, it must establish not only what the paper is about, but also why it matters. A well-written introduction engages the reader, demonstrates the paper's relevance within its academic field, and sets expectations for the structure and tone of what follows.

In addition to the three core parts outlined above, many introductions in humanities research also include more nuanced elements. The first of these would be the *background,* which refers to the broader scholarly or contextual setting into which the study fits. Instead of launching immediately into the specific research problem, effective introductions often provide a brief discussion of historical, theoretical, or disciplinary developments that have shaped the topic. This helps set the inquiry within an ongoing academic dialogue. Another important element is the *aim*, which is separate from the general purpose. The aim communicates what the paper specifically intends to do, whether it is to reinterpret a literary motif, analyse a syntactic phenomenon, or explore a discourse pattern across cultures. It should be clear, specific, and aligned with the scope of the study. Last is the *thesis statement,* which reveals the controlling idea or central claim the paper will defend. It should be concise, arguable, and ideally reflect both the topic and the researcher's position. In many humanities papers, the thesis is interpretive rather than declarative, proposing a line of inquiry rather than asserting a fixed conclusion.

The Table below offers a visual representation of the introduction structure, with tips to making it effective.

Component	Function	Tip
Background	Sets up the broader context and scholarly debate	Avoid listing facts; frame the topic as an ongoing conversation
Research problem	Identifies a specific issue or gap within that context	Make sure it is clear why the problem is significant
Aim or objective	Clarifies what the paper will do or explore	Avoid vague verbs like "discuss" or "talk about"
Thesis statement	States the main argument or guiding perspective	Ensure it is arguable and not just a summary
Overview/structure	Provides a roadmap of sections or argument progression	Keep this brief, 1-2 sentences are usually enough

Table 45. Introduction structure

The text below is an example of an effective (abridged) introduction.

While metaphors are typically studied within the realm of literary analysis, recent work in cognitive linguistics has shown their pervasive role in everyday communication and academic writing (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). In EFL academic settings, however, the role of the metaphor in student-authored texts remains underexplored, particularly in multilingual contexts where L1 transfer may shape figurative language use. This paper aims to investigate metaphorical patterns in argumentative essays written by Macedonian university students enrolled in English-medium instruction. It argues that metaphor density and conceptual variety are influenced not only by topic and genre, but also by students' conceptual repertoires in their first language. The paper begins with a review of the Cognitive Metaphor Theory, followed by an analysis of 50 student essays using the Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA) framework. The findings suggest implications for writing instruction and raise questions about cross-linguistic metaphor awareness in academic discourse.

15.3.4. Methods Section

The *methods* section explains how the study was designed and carried out and is typically written in the *past tense*. Depending on the field, it may

include the *type of research* (qualitative, quantitative, mixed), data collection instruments (e.g., surveys, interview questions), and the materials and procedures used.

The text below provides an example of an effective (abridged) methods section.

> To investigate gender representation in British daytime television, the researcher conducted a qualitative content analysis of 15 episodes from three nationally broadcast talk shows. Each episode was transcribed and coded for lexical items, turn-taking patterns, and interruptions. A coding scheme was developed based on prior sociolinguistic research and pilot-tested on two sample episodes before full analysis.

15.3.5. Results Section

How the results of the research are presented depends on the kind of research that was carried out and on the subject matter. The *results* section presents the outcomes of the study, and the results may be *quantitative*, i.e., data that can be measured and presented systematically and economically in tables, charts, and graphs, which includes quantities and comparisons of sets of data, or *qualitative*, which includes brief descriptions, explanations, or instructions. Though this kind of descriptive or explanatory information can also be presented in tables and charts, it is often presented in essay-like prose or even lists.

There are specific conventions for creating tables, charts, and graphs and organising the information they contain. In general, they should only be used for the purpose of clarifying. In the accompanying explanation and discussion, they should be referred to by number and should contain an explanation as to why specifically they are being referred to; in addition, a caption should accompany the graphic. The rule of thumb for presenting a graphic is first to introduce it by name, show it, and then interpret it. The results section is usually written in the *past tense*.

The text below provides an example of an effective (abridged) results section.

> Analysis revealed that male hosts interrupted female guests twice as often as they interrupted male guests. Table 1 shows the frequency of interruptions by gender and role. Additionally, the lexical choices of male hosts tended to include more directive and evaluative language, while female hosts used more supportive and affiliative markers.

15.3.6. Discussion Section

The *discussion* section essentially needs to generalise what has been learned from the research. One way this can be done is to explain the consequences or meaning of the results and then make points that support and refer back to the statements that were made in the introduction. The discussion should be organised so that it relates directly to the thesis, meaning that there is no need to introduce new ideas here or to discuss side issues that are not directly related to the exploration and discovery of the thesis. The discussion section is usually written in the *present tense*.

The text below provides an example of an effective (abridged) discussion section.

> The findings support previous studies on gendered language practices in media discourse (e.g., Tannen, 1994; Coates, 2004). The frequent interruptions directed at female guests suggest a reinforcement of traditional power asymmetries. These patterns not only reflect but potentially reproduce societal gender norms in public discourse. The study contributes to ongoing debates in media linguistics and gender representation by providing empirical support for conversational dominance.

15.3.6.1. Implications

The *implications* section explains why the findings matter beyond the specific case or dataset that was studied. It connects the results to broader theoretical debates, practical applications, or future research possibilities. The language used here needs to be concise and confident, and avoid vague generalisations. In addition, the findings ought to be related to existing scholarship or debates, with clarification as to how they might influence various practices, decisions, or further research. This section would include a restatement of the key findings, an explanation of their broader significance, as well as suggestions of practical or theoretical relevance.

The two texts that follow below provide an example of an effective (abridged) implications section in the fields of linguistics, specifically applied semantics, and literature, specifically, gender and narrative voice, respectively.

> The results of this study highlight the prevalence of culturally specific conceptual metaphors in Macedonian university students' argumentative writing. This suggests a strong influence of L1 metaphorical frameworks in L2 composition. The implications are twofold: pedagogically, explicit instruction in metaphor awareness could help EFL learners use figurative language more effectively in academic writing. The-

oretically, the findings support Lakoff and Johnson's claim that the metaphor is not merely a rhetorical device but a core component of cognition, one shaped by cultural context. Future work might explore how these metaphorical structures evolve with increased academic exposure in English.

This analysis of narrative perspective in *The Handmaid's Tale* reveals how internal focalisation intensifies the reader's experience of surveillance and disempowerment. The implications extend beyond literary analysis: the novel's narrative strategies echo real-world concerns about voice, agency, and the politics of storytelling. In feminist literary studies, this supports arguments that form and content are inseparable in articulating resistance. In the classroom, such narrative techniques can be used to foster critical discussion around representation and identity in contemporary fiction.

Implications may be of a theoretical or a practical nature, and the differences between them are visually represented in the Table below.

Aspect	Theoretical implications	Practical implications
Purpose	Advance academic knowledge or contribute to theoretical frameworks	Apply findings to real-world contexts (teaching, policy, interpretation)
Audience	Scholars, researchers, academic journals	Educators, curriculum designers, students, institutions
Focus	Refining concepts, models, analytical categories, or interpretive frameworks	Enhancing classroom practice, improving communication, guiding reading or pedagogy
Example (linguistics)	Confirms Lakoff & Johnson's theory of embodied metaphor in L2 learner data	Suggests incorporating metaphor-awareness activities into EFL writing instruction
Example (literature)	Supports narratological theories on focalisation and reader alignment	Informs how literature can be taught to develop empathy and awareness of power structures
Style of writing	Cautiously evaluative, referencing key theories or studies	Action-oriented, sometimes includes recommendations
Place in paper	Typically part of the *Discussion* section	Often appears in *Discussion* or *Conclusion/Recommendations*

Table 46. Theoretical versus practical implications

15.3.6.2. Limitations

In a standard academic paper, especially in humanities or linguistics research, the *limitations* section typically appears at the end of the discussion section or immediately before the conclusion.

The most common location tends to be at the end of the discussion section, as after the findings have been interpreted, acknowledgement is provided as to what the study could not address and why, which adds transparency and strengthens the paper's academic credibility.

However, in longer papers, this section may also appear as a stand-alone subsection just before the conclusion. This would work well if the limitations are complex or need more detailed explanation.

The text below provides an example of an effective (abridged) limitations section.

> While this study offers valuable insights into the role of metaphorical framing in shaping public discourse on climate change, several limitations must be acknowledged. This study is limited to a corpus of 250 English-language news articles, which may not fully reflect broader global media representations or longer-term trends. The categorisation of outlets by political orientation, while grounded in established sources, may overlook editorial nuances. Additionally, the qualitative analysis of metaphors involves interpretive subjectivity, even with the aid of concordance tools. The study also excludes visual and audience-based data, which could further inform how metaphorical framing is received and interpreted. Future research may address these gaps by incorporating multilingual corpora, longitudinal datasets, multimodal analysis, and empirical audience studies to deepen our understanding of how metaphors operate across media and cultural contexts.

15.3.7. Conclusion(s) and Recommendations

The *conclusion* reaffirms the thesis or research aim, summarises key findings, and may suggest future research directions. This section should relate directly to the ideas presented in the introduction section and should not present any new ideas.

If requested, a recommendations subsection can propose actions, speculate on future developments, highlight unresolved questions, propose a solution to a problem, offer a judgment, or speculate on the implications and consequences of the ideas looked at previously. This section is usually written in the *present tense*.

The text below provides an example of an effective (abridged) conclusion(s) and recommendations section.

This study has demonstrated the persistence of gendered discourse patterns in British televised talk shows. By examining both lexical and turn-taking features, the analysis confirms that conversational control remains unequally distributed. Future research might extend this analysis to online platforms or explore the intersection of gender with other social variables such as age and ethnicity. Educational initiatives in media literacy could be recommended to raise awareness about implicit bias in broadcast communication.

The conclusion is essentially one of the most important parts of the paper as it presents one last chance for the writer to make an impression and show the significance of the findings.

15.3.8. Body Paragraphs: Building an Argument

The *body* of the academic paper is where the argument is developed, supported, and refined. Each paragraph should revolve around a single main idea that directly supports the paper's thesis. A well-structured body paragraph needs to begin with a clear topic sentence, present supporting evidence (data, citations, examples), offer critical interpretation or explanation, and transition logically to the next paragraph.

If we were to visualise the structure of an effective body paragraph, it would look something like what is presented in the Table below, with relevant linguistics- and literature-related examples.

Component	Purpose	Example (linguistics)	Example (literature)
Topic sentence	States the main idea of the paragraph	"Code-switching in informal interviews often serves a social bonding function among peers."	"The motif of entrapment in *The Yellow Wallpaper* symbolises the narrator's struggle for autonomy."
Evidence	Supports the claim with data or reference	"In 8 out of 10 transcripts, speakers used L1 when expressing solidarity or humour."	"Gilman describes the wallpaper as having a 'sickly sulphur tint,' reinforcing its oppressive imagery."
Interpretation	Explains how the evidence supports the argument	"This shift indicates an emotional closeness not conveyed through the formal register of L2."	"The colour evokes sickness, tying the domestic space to the narrator's psychological deterioration."

Component	Purpose	Example (linguistics)	Example (literature)
Transition	Prepares for the next paragraph or idea	"This social function of code-switching parallels how language constructs group identity."	"This motif continues in the final scene, where the narrator's physical actions mirror her mental state."

Table 47. Structure of a body paragraph

A popular structure for body paragraphs is the PEEL Model (Point-Evidence-Explanation-Link), where the acronym can be explained as follows:

–   Point: Make a claim
–   Evidence: Support it with data or a quote
–   Explanation: Interpret it and connect it back to the thesis
–   Link: Transition to the next point

Each body paragraph should start with a topic sentence, not with a fact. The *topic sentence* should present the main idea of the paragraph and express a point of view. The sentences that follow should support the topic sentence with additional supporting ideas, specific details, interesting facts, statistics, clear explanations, and relevant examples. All supporting sentences should be logical and connected with appropriate linking words to make it easier for the reader to follow the argument.

Every paragraph should end with a *concluding sentence*, and it should reflect the writer's own ideas, not a source citation. The last sentence in a paragraph should review the key points that have been discussed in it, emphasise the main idea or thesis statement, and prepare the reader to the points that are going to be discussed in the next paragraph.

It is important not to make paragraphs too long, as people tend to find it difficult to focus on large blocks of text; paragraphs should not be longer than ¾ of a page. When a paragraph is too long, it should be divided logically into two separate paragraphs.

16. Academic Style, Language, And Citation Practices

Academic writing in the humanities requires not only clarity and coherence but also discipline-specific language, appropriate tone, and a strict adherence to ethical citation practices. Whether analysing literary texts or exploring linguistic phenomena, students must convey complex ideas with precision while demonstrating awareness of academic conventions. The section that follows outlines the stylistic and ethical expectations for writing in the humanities and provides detailed guidance on citation systems widely used in the field.

16.1. Tone, Formality, and Disciplinary Conventions

Writing in the humanities is typically formal, analytical, and objective in tone. Colloquialisms, contractions, and overly personal language should be avoided unless a reflective style is explicitly required. For example, instead of writing "I think this shows how language changes," a more appropriate phrasing would be "This analysis suggests that language undergoes systematic variation."

Academic tone also involves measured assertions and cautious language; words like "appears," "suggests," and "may indicate" are preferred over absolute claims.

Disciplinary conventions may vary as in literary analysis, writing often engages with theoretical discourse and interpretive argumentation, whereas in linguistics, the tone is more data-driven and descriptive. Despite these nuances, both require clarity, precision, and a logical progression of ideas. Developing an academic voice involves reading extensively within one's field to internalise style conventions and argument structures.

16.2. Using Disciplinary Language in Context

A key feature of academic writing is the use of *discipline-specific terminology*. In literary studies, this might include terms such as "intertextuality", "free indirect discourse", or "pathetic fallacy." In linguistics, on the other hand, reference may be made to "morphemes", "semantic roles", or "sociolinguistic variables." Using such terminology accurately demonstrates the students' familiarity with academic discourse and allows for a more precise expression of complex ideas.

However, the terminology must also be integrated with clarity. This means that overloading sentences with jargon, especially without explanation, should be avoided. A strong academic paper needs to balance technical vocabulary with accessible phrasing. For example, instead of writing "The protagonist is an unreliable narrator due to analeptic temporal disruption," it might be more appropriate to use "The narrator's unreliability is reinforced through the use of flashbacks that disrupt the chronological flow of the narrative." When used carefully, disciplinary language helps to improve the paper's credibility and communicates sophistication.

The examples that follow illustrate disciplinary style in practice, with MLA used in literature, and APA used in linguistics, respectively.

In Austen's *Emma*, the narrator's irony "constructs both empathy and critique simultaneously" (Butler 88).

Code-switching may serve to signal solidarity or distance in social interactions (Poplack, 1980).

16.3. Ethical Integration of Sources and Transition to Citation

Ethical source integration is foundational to academic writing. Students must know how to paraphrase effectively, avoid patchwriting, and ensure that all ideas and data from external sources are properly attributed. This not only prevents plagiarism but also reinforces their credibility. Quoting selectively and paraphrasing accurately, followed by insightful commentary, demonstrates both students' understanding and originality.

This ethical responsibility naturally leads us into the practice of citation. *Citation* is not simply a technical requirement; it is a scholarly convention. Through citation, writers position their arguments within existing debates and show respect for intellectual property. The following section takes a brief look at the most widely used citation styles in the humanities with the aim of helping students understand how to apply them appropriately.

16.4. Referencing and Citation

Humanities disciplines commonly use three citation styles: *MLA* (*Modern Language Association*)*, APA* (*American Psychological Association*)*, and Chicago.* Each style serves distinct purposes and is aligned with specific fields. *MLA* is primarily used in literature, language, and cultural studies. It emphasises the author and page number in in-text citations. *APA* is preferred in social sciences and linguistics, focusing on the author and year of publication. *Chicago* is often used in interdisciplinary research or history-related humanities writing and allows for footnotes/endnotes or author-date citation systems. The Table below offers a visual comparison of the three styles of citation mentioned above.

Style	In-text citation example	Works Cited / References example	Field/application
MLA	(Smith 23)	Smith, John. *Language and Identity*. Routledge, 2020.	Literature, Cultural Studies
APA	(Smith, 2020, p. 23)	Smith, J. (2020). *Language and identity*. Routledge.	Linguistics, Applied Linguistics
Chicago	Smith, *Language and Identity*, 23.	Smith, John. *Language and Identity*. New York: Routledge, 2020.	History, Interdisciplinary Humanities

Table 48. Comparison of citation styles

17. Sample Papers And Writing Tasks

17.1. Paper Samples

The following two texts are excerpts of an abridged literary analysis and an abridged discourse analysis, respectively, with accompanying annotations.

<u>Literary Analysis</u>

Irony and Class Mobility in Jane Austen's *Emma*

In Jane Austen's *Emma*, irony serves not merely as a stylistic feature but as a narrative device to explore the rigid social hierarchies of Regency England. For instance, the narrator's subtle critique of Emma's assumptions about Harriet's marriage prospects is embedded in an ironic tone that reveals Emma's own class prejudices: "Harriet Smith's intimacy at Hartfield was soon a settled thing." Austen's diction here, particularly the word "settled," mocks Emma's belief in her influence, suggesting instead that the situation is precarious and socially inappropriate (Austen 34).

> Annotations:
> – *Thesis statement:* Clear and analytical, connecting irony to social critique.
> – *Textual evidence:* Direct quote from the novel with close reading.
> – *Integration of critical source:* Could follow in the next sentence (e.g., Butler's theory of ironic empathy).
> – *MLA style:* In-text citation without comma before page number.

<u>Discourse Analysis</u>

Power and Persuasion in Political Rhetoric:
A Critical Discourse Analysis of Inaugural Speeches

Using Fairclough's three-dimensional model of discourse, this analysis explores how political authority is established through linguistic choices in inaugural speeches. For example, the frequent use of inclusive pronouns such as "we" and "our" creates an artificial sense of unity between speaker and audience: "We will rise from the ashes of division" (Biden, 2021). This lexical strategy functions ideologically to mask hierarchical power relations, promoting a narrative of shared national identity while maintaining elite dominance.

> Annotations:
> – *Theoretical framework:* Fairclough's model clearly introduced.
> – *Analytical focus:* Explicit explanation of language choices.

– *Evidence of integration:* Strong example from primary source.
– *APA style:* Parenthetical citation includes author and year.

17.2. Writing a Complete Academic Paper

The section that follows consists of writing tasks with relevant accompanying information. Students need to carefully look through the options, select the one they would like to focus on, and follow the supplementary instructions.

The *Assessment rubric,* the *Peer feedback checklist* for the *Abstract and Keywords,* as well as the *Self-reflection form for the final paper draft* are applicable to all of the writing tasks below.

Criteria	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Satisfactory (3)	Needs improvement (1-2)
Relevance and focus	Clear, original focus closely tied to topic	Good focus with occasional digressions	Some relevance, but lacks focus	Lacks relevance; vague or off-topic
Research depth	Insightful use of multiple high-quality sources	Adequate use of appropriate sources	Minimal or outdated source use	Poor or missing research basis
Organisation	Excellent logical flow and structure	Mostly well-organised with minor issues	Some structure but lacks coherence	Disorganised or confusing
Source integration and referencing	Smooth, correct integration of sources	Minor style errors, well-integrated	Some inconsistencies in citing/paraphrasing	Poor source use or referencing errors
Language and style	Precise, academic, grammatically accurate; good use of specific-discipline terminology	Mostly accurate with some informal tone; some use of specific-discipline terminology	Frequent style/grammar issues; limited use of specific-discipline terminology	Inappropriate tone, major errors; no/incorrect use of specific-discipline terminology
Critical thinking	Highly analytical, original insights	Good analysis, some reflection	Descriptive with limited analysis	Lacks depth or originality
Conclusion and implications	Strong, clearly linked to paper content	Relevant, but somewhat general	Weak connecton to main points	Missing or unclear conclusion

Table 49. Assessment rubric

Instructions: Read your peer's abstract and keywords section, and check the relevant boxes. Provide suggestions as needed, and be constructive and as specific as possible.

Criteria	Yes	Needs revision	No	Comments
The abstract clearly states the research topic and purpose.	☐	☐	☐	
The main argument or aim is clearly identifiable.	☐	☐	☐	
The abstract summarises the main findings.	☐	☐	☐	
The methods are described concisely.	☐	☐	☐	
The implications or relevance are noted.	☐	☐	☐	
The abstract is concise and focused, and falls within the word limit.	☐	☐	☐	
The language is formal, clear, and academic; no excessive details or citations.	☐	☐	☐	
The keywords are specific, relevant, and well-chosen.	☐	☐	☐	

Table 50. Peer feedback checklist - Abstract and Keywords writing

Suggestions for improvement:
_____.

Instructions: Read your final paper draft and complete the Table below. Be honest.

Criteria	Evaluation	Comment
Thesis statement *Is the main argument clear and well-defined?*	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No	_____
Structure and organisation *Are the sections clearly marked and logically arranged?*	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No	_____

Criteria	Evaluation	Comment
Use of sources		
Are sources integrated effectively and appropriately cited?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No	_____
Critical analysis		
Does the paper analyse rather than simply describe?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No	_____
Language and style		
Is the tone appropriate and the grammar accurate?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No	_____

Table 51. Self-reflection form - Final Paper Draft

17.3. Writing Tasks

Writing Task 17 - Educational Technology and Language Learning

Objective: To develop a research-based academic paper that critically examines a current topic in educational technology for language teaching and learning. Students need to analyse technological developments, assess implications for pedagogy, and offer evidence-based recommendations.

Possible Topics:
– Self-paced and personalised language learning
– AI-powered language teaching and learning
– Real-time feedback and AI-assisted assessment
– Addressing learning challenges using AI tools
– Future trends in AI and language pedagogy
– Global implications of educational technology in language classrooms
– Ethical concerns: privacy, bias, dependency, inequality
– Emotional engagement in tech-assisted language learning
– Digital tools and apps in language education
– Generative AI: classroom practices and strategies
– Student perspectives on learning with AI

Deliverables:
– Academic paper (3000-4000 words)

- Abstract (250-300 words, italics), with 5-7 keywords
- Final presentation (PowerPoint or similar)
- Participation in peer feedback sessions

Format Guidelines:
- Times New Roman, 12 pt, justified, single-spaced
- Section headings required throughout
- Referencing style: APA 7th edition

Structure:
- Title Page
- Abstract (250-300 words, on its own page, italicised, with the topic, aim, method, results, and conclusion in a single paragraph)
- Keywords (5-7 terms following the abstract)
- Introduction
- Background / Literature Review
- Focus of the Paper
- Solutions and Recommendations
- Future Research Directions
- Conclusion
- References

Note:
- The paper may be written individually, in pairs, or in groups of three (maximum)
- Work will be completed primarily in-class with integrated tasks (e.g., peer feedback, presentation)
- Use formal academic register appropriate to EFL and applied linguistics research.

Writing Task 18 - Links between Beliefs and Language

Objective: To develop a research-based academic paper exploring the relationship between beliefs and language use and acquisition. The topic may be approached from theoretical or empirical perspectives, considering first, second, or foreign language contexts. The paper should aim to critically evaluate how beliefs shape linguistic behaviour, instruction, and success, while drawing on interdisciplinary insights from education, psycholinguistics, psychology, neuroscience, and cultural studies.

Key Focus Areas:
- Which comes first: language or belief?
- What language-related beliefs do teachers and learners hold?

- How do beliefs impact linguistic achievement or learning motivation?
- What individual, social, or cultural factors influence language-related beliefs?
- How are beliefs verbalised and justified in different contexts?
- Which theoretical frameworks or methodologies engage with language and belief systems?

Possible Topics:
- Beliefs and language: psychological, social, and cultural dimensions
- How teachers' or students' beliefs affect language teaching/learning outcomes
- Beliefs and linguistic affect (e.g., motivation, anxiety, identity)
- Instructional strategies that account for belief systems in language education
- Interdisciplinary perspectives (e.g., cognitive neuroscience, educational philosophy)
- The axiological (value-based) dimension in applied linguistics or pedagogy
- Empirical research on belief systems in multilingual or multicultural classrooms
- Theoretical debates around language ideology and linguistic determinism

Deliverables:
- Academic paper (3000-4000 words)
- Abstract (250-300 words, italics), with 5-7 keywords
- Final presentation (PowerPoint or similar)
- Participation in peer feedback sessions

Format Guidelines:
- Times New Roman, 12 pt, justified, single-spaced
- Section headings required throughout
- Referencing style: APA 7th edition

Structure:
- Title Page
- Abstract (250-300 words, on its own page, italicised, with the topic, aim, method, results, and conclusion in a single paragraph)
- Keywords (5-7 terms following the abstract)
- Introduction
- Background / Literature Review

- Focus of the Paper
- Solutions and Recommendations
- Future Research Directions
- Conclusion
- References

Note:
- The paper may be written individually, in pairs, or in groups of three (maximum)
- Work will be completed primarily in-class with integrated tasks (e.g., peer feedback, presentation)
- Use formal academic register appropriate to EFL and applied linguistics research.

Writing Task 19 - Languages, Cultures, and Communication

Objective: To produce a research-based academic paper that critically explores the intersections of language, culture, and communication in contemporary society. Students need to reflect on the evolving status of the humanities and social sciences, examine pressing challenges, and offer constructive, research-informed perspectives on future developments, including technological and pedagogical innovations.

Context: The humanities and social sciences are at a turning point. Student enrolment is declining, research funding is shrinking, and entire language programmes are disappearing, even as global communication increasingly demands multilingual and intercultural competence. This paradox invites reflection and action: how can language and cultural study be defended, adapted, and revitalised in a rapidly changing academic and professional landscape?

Possible Areas of Focus:
- The role of language and culture in shaping professional identity or communication effectiveness
- Curriculum reform and learning outcomes in language and cultural studies
- Pedagogical strategies for fostering intercultural competence
- Methodological innovations in teaching languages and culture
- The use of digital tools in language and cultural education
- Addressing the gap between academic training and workplace demands
- Advocacy for the humanities: framing the value of language, translation, and cultural literacy

- Trends in distance learning and the digital classroom
- Integrating sustainability, ethics, or social justice into language and communication programmes
- Balancing global and local perspectives in multilingual education

Deliverables:
- Academic paper (3000-4000 words)
- Abstract (250-300 words, italics), with 5-7 keywords
- Final presentation (PowerPoint or similar)
- Participation in peer feedback sessions

Format Guidelines:
- Times New Roman, 12 pt, justified, single-spaced
- Section headings required throughout
- Referencing style: APA 7th edition

Structure:
- Title Page
- Abstract (250-300 words, on its own page, italicised, with the topic, aim, method, results, and conclusion in a single paragraph)
- Keywords (5-7 terms following the abstract)
- Introduction
- Background / Literature Review
- Focus of the Paper
- Solutions and Recommendations
- Future Research Directions
- Conclusion
- References

Note:
- The paper may be written individually, in pairs, or in groups of three (maximum)
- Work will be completed primarily in-class with integrated tasks (e.g., peer feedback, presentation)
- Use formal academic register appropriate to EFL and applied linguistics research.

Writing Task 20 - The Role of English in Global Communication

Objective: To critically examine the evolving role of English in global communication, particularly in light of cultural dynamics and digital innovation. Students are expected to analyse how English functions across borders, disciplines, and platforms, and to reflect on how English language teaching and research are adapting to globalised, multicultural contexts.

Context: English continues to dominate global academic, commercial, and media landscapes. Yet, the rise of digital technologies, the diversification of professional communication, and ongoing debates about linguistic imperialism have brought new complexity to its global role. As educational institutions shift toward more interdisciplinary and globally conscious models, English language education must respond, not only by teaching language skills but also by cultivating intercultural awareness and critical digital literacy.

Possible Areas of Focus:
– The cultural implications of English as a global lingua franca
– English language education in multilingual or multicultural contexts
– Intercultural communication and miscommunication in digital environments
– The role of English in international business, diplomacy, or media
– Challenges and strategies in teaching English and Western culture abroad
– The influence of English on local languages and identities
– Decolonising English language teaching in global education
– The impact of digital tools on English language acquisition and use
– Student or teacher perspectives on global English
– Paradigm shifts in English language education policy and methodology

Deliverables:
– Academic paper (3000-4000 words)
– Abstract (250-300 words, italics), with 5-7 keywords
– Final presentation (PowerPoint or similar)
– Participation in peer feedback sessions

Format Guidelines:
– Times New Roman, 12 pt, justified, single-spaced
– Section headings required throughout
– Referencing style: APA 7th edition

Structure:
– Title Page
– Abstract (250-300 words, on its own page, italicised, with the topic, aim, method, results, and conclusion in a single paragraph)
– Keywords (5-7 terms following the abstract)
– Introduction
– Background / Literature Review

- – Focus of the Paper
- – Solutions and Recommendations
- – Future Research Directions
- – Conclusion
- – References

Note:
- – The paper may be written individually, in pairs, or in groups of three (maximum)
- – Work will be completed primarily in-class with integrated tasks (e.g., peer feedback, presentation)
- – Use formal academic register appropriate to EFL and applied linguistics research.

Writing Task 21 - AI-Based Translation in EFL/ESL Education: Applications, Challenges, and Futures

Objective: To critically examine the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based translation tools in EFL/ESL learning and teaching. Students need to investigate how AI-powered translation technologies influence language acquisition, intercultural communication, and pedagogical practice. The paper should balance theoretical insights from translation studies and applied linguistics with practical considerations for classroom and professional contexts.

Context: In recent years, AI translation tools such as DeepL, Google Translate, and ChatGPT-powered systems have become widely accessible. These technologies are reshaping approaches to vocabulary acquisition, text comprehension, writing, and cross-linguistic transfer. In the context of higher education, particularly for English majors, AI translation raises important questions: How can such tools be used to support learning without fostering dependency? What are the implications for translation accuracy, style, and register? How can educators address ethical issues such as authorship, plagiarism, and bias in AI-generated translations?

Possible Areas of Focus:
- – Classroom integration of AI translation tools to support comprehension and production
- – Impact of AI translation on L1–L2 and L2–L1 transfer in student writing
- – Developing AI literacy and critical evaluation skills for translation accuracy
- – AI-assisted subtitling and dubbing for language learning

- Using AI translation for academic writing support while maintaining academic integrity
- Comparative analysis of human versus AI translation in specific text genres (e.g., literary, academic, technical)
- Pedagogical strategies to prevent overreliance on AI translation tools
- Cultural and pragmatic accuracy in AI translations
- Ethical issues: plagiarism, bias, and copyright in AI-mediated translation
- Teacher perceptions and training needs for integrating AI translation in EFL/ESL contexts
- Case studies of AI translation use in (Macedonian) university settings
- The evolving role, relevance, and career prospects of human translators in the era of AI translation technologies

Deliverables:
- Academic paper (3000-4000 words)
- Abstract (250-300 words, italics), with 5-7 keywords
- Final presentation (PowerPoint or similar)
- Participation in peer feedback sessions

Format Guidelines:
- Times New Roman, 12 pt, justified, single-spaced
- Section headings required throughout
- Referencing style: APA 7th edition

Structure:
- Title Page
- Abstract (250-300 words, on its own page, italicised, with the topic, aim, method, results, and conclusion in a single paragraph)
- Keywords (5-7 terms following the abstract)
- Introduction
- Background / Literature Review
- Focus of the Paper
- Solutions and Recommendations
- Future Research Directions
- Conclusion
- References

Note:
- The paper may be written individually, in pairs, or in groups of three (maximum)

– Work will be completed primarily in-class with integrated tasks (e.g., peer feedback, presentation)
– Use formal academic register appropriate to EFL and applied linguistics research.

Writing Task 22 - Teaching Languages and Cultures in the Post-Method Era

Objective: To critically explore the challenges and opportunities of language and culture teaching in the contemporary educational landscape, particularly within the post-method era. Students need to look into innovative practices, interdisciplinary approaches, and socio-political implications affecting language education today. The paper needs to reflect on both theoretical concepts and practical applications in multilingual and multicultural contexts.

Context: In the face of political, economic, and institutional pressures, the fields of humanities and language education are experiencing reduced support, marginalisation, and increased scrutiny. Simultaneously, the post-method era calls for more flexible, adaptive, and context-sensitive approaches to language and culture teaching. It is, therefore, crucial for educators and researchers to consolidate efforts, share knowledge, and promote diverse strategies that respond to global challenges while maintaining pedagogical integrity and cultural sensitivity.

Possible Areas of Focus:
– Post-method pedagogy and implications for classroom practice
– The role of teacher autonomy and reflective teaching in language education
– Integrating language skills and cultural literacy in contemporary curricula
– Developing intercultural communicative competence in multilingual settings
– Innovative and context-specific language teaching methodologies
– Teaching and assessing cultural content alongside language instruction
– Challenges in ESP, CLIL, or multilingual education settings
– Language policies and their impact on teaching practices
– Reimagining assessment practices in diverse linguistic classrooms
– Professional identity and resilience of language educators
– Institutional challenges: budget cuts, policy shifts, declining enrolment

– Networking, collaboration, and transnational research in language education

Deliverables:
– Academic paper (3000-4000 words)
– Abstract (250-300 words, italics), with 5-7 keywords
– Final presentation (PowerPoint or similar)
– Participation in peer feedback sessions

Format Guidelines:
– Times New Roman, 12 pt, justified, single-spaced
– Section headings required throughout
– Referencing style: APA 7th edition

Structure:
– Title Page
– Abstract (250-300 words, on its own page, italicised, with the topic, aim, method, results, and conclusion in a single paragraph)
– Keywords (5-7 terms following the abstract)
– Introduction
– Background / Literature Review
– Focus of the Paper
– Solutions and Recommendations
– Future Research Directions
– Conclusion
– References

Note:
– The paper may be written individually, in pairs, or in groups of three (maximum)
– Work will be completed primarily in-class with integrated tasks (e.g., peer feedback, presentation)
– Use formal academic register appropriate to EFL and applied linguistics research.

Writing Task 23 - LSP Teaching Innovations in a Changing World

Objective: To examine innovative approaches to teaching Language for Specific Purposes (LSP) in response to contemporary social, political, and economic instability. Students ought to explore how new methods and technologies, including AI, can be harnessed to meet learners' evolving needs and equip them with language and communication skills tailored to specific professional domains.

Context: In an increasingly unpredictable and competitive global environment, language learners must be prepared not only linguistically, but also professionally and culturally. The demand for targeted language instruction, whether in law, business, healthcare, or engineering, has made LSP a dynamic and necessary field. At the same time, social instability and rapid technological developments demand that LSP educators stay agile, creative, and resourceful.

Possible Areas of Focus:
– Methodological innovations in LSP instruction
– Enhancing learner motivation and engagement in LSP classrooms
– Integrating culture and communication training in specific-purpose contexts
– Needs analysis and curriculum design for specialised language instruction
– The role of sociolinguistics in LSP teaching
– Using AI tools in LSP education (e.g. adaptive feedback systems, materials generation, simulations)
– Comparative perspectives on AI-assisted vs. traditional LSP methodologies
– Ethical considerations in deploying AI in specialised language instruction
– The impact of social and labour market instability on LSP priorities and delivery
– Practical LSP classroom applications and case studies across disciplines (e.g. business, medicine, IT, tourism)

Deliverables:
– Academic paper (3000-4000 words)
– Abstract (250-300 words, italics), with 5-7 keywords
– Final presentation (PowerPoint or similar)
– Participation in peer feedback sessions

Format Guidelines:
– Times New Roman, 12 pt, justified, single-spaced
– Section headings required throughout
– Referencing style: APA 7th edition

Structure:
– Title Page
– Abstract (250-300 words, on its own page, italicised, with the topic, aim, method, results, and conclusion in a single paragraph)
– Keywords (5-7 terms following the abstract)

- Introduction
- Background / Literature Review
- Focus of the Paper
- Solutions and Recommendations
- Future Research Directions
- Conclusion
- References

Note:
- The paper may be written individually, in pairs, or in groups of three (maximum)
- Work will be completed primarily in-class with integrated tasks (e.g., peer feedback, presentation)
- Use formal academic register appropriate to EFL and applied linguistics research.

Writing Task 24 - Artificial Intelligence in SLA and FLL/T

Objective: To explore the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in modern language education, including both its transformative potential and ethical, pedagogical, and practical implications. Students are encouraged to critically engage with emerging AI tools and their impact on the teaching and learning of second and foreign languages in diverse educational settings.

Context: AI has become a significant force in reshaping language education. From adaptive learning platforms and automated feedback to virtual tutors and speech recognition tools, AI is changing how learners interact with content, instructors, and each other. However, these advancements bring critical questions about privacy, academic integrity, learner autonomy, and the balance between technology and human interaction. Students are invited to approach these issues from theoretical, applied, or empirical perspectives, focusing on Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and Foreign Language Learning/Teaching (FLL/T).

Possible Areas of Focus:
- AI-driven language instruction (e.g., chatbots, intelligent tutoring systems)
- Applicability and limitations of AI-based EdTech in diverse learning contexts
- Evolving roles of teachers and students in AI-supported classrooms
- AI-assisted assessment and feedback systems
- AI and learner motivation, autonomy, and engagement

- Balancing AI tools with traditional pedagogical strategies
- AI-enhanced collaborative learning and group work
- Natural Language Processing (NLP) applications for language learning
- Speech recognition and pronunciation training using AI
- Adaptive platforms for personalised learning trajectories
- VR/AR integration in AI-supported immersive language learning
- Ethical implications: surveillance, authorship, plagiarism, digital equity
- Threats and risks: dependency, loss of human interaction, teacher deskilling

Deliverables:
- Academic paper (3000-4000 words)
- Abstract (250-300 words, italics), with 5-7 keywords
- Final presentation (PowerPoint or similar)
- Participation in peer feedback sessions

Format Guidelines:
- Times New Roman, 12 pt, justified, single-spaced
- Section headings required throughout
- Referencing style: APA 7th edition

Structure:
- Title Page
- Abstract (250-300 words, on its own page, italicised, with the topic, aim, method, results, and conclusion in a single paragraph)
- Keywords (5-7 terms following the abstract)
- Introduction
- Background / Literature Review
- Focus of the Paper
- Solutions and Recommendations
- Future Research Directions
- Conclusion
- References

Note:
- The paper may be written individually, in pairs, or in groups of three (maximum)
- Work will be completed primarily in-class with integrated tasks (e.g., peer feedback, presentation)
- Use formal academic register appropriate to EFL and applied linguistics research.

<u>Writing Task 25 - Writing from an Interdisciplinary Perspective</u>

Objective: To explore writing as a dynamic, multifaceted, and evolving activity situated across disciplines, historical contexts, and modes of communication. This writing task encourages students to analyse how writing functions as a cognitive, cultural, and creative act, drawing from diverse academic fields and theoretical perspectives.

Context: Writing is no longer confined to the linear, print-based traditions of the past. In today's digital age, writing spans genres, modalities, and platforms, reflecting cultural shifts and interdisciplinary integration. At the same time, debates continue around whether writing can truly be "taught," how it develops across the lifespan, and what role it plays in shaping critical thinking, identity, and social agency. From the handwritten manuscript to AI-assisted multimodal composition, writing serves not only communicative but also epistemological, rhetorical, and civic purposes. Students are encouraged to reflect on both the continuity and change in writing practices across contexts.

Possible Areas of Focus:

1. Writing across the Disciplines: Theory and Practice

– Can writing be taught? If so, how and by whom?
– Reader-writer interaction: How do audiences engage with texts?
– The development of writing across age groups
– Interdisciplinary writing: bridging the sciences, arts, and humanities
– The role and transformation of traditional writing in the digital/ visual age
– Writing as a process vs. writing as a product in different academic cultures
– Historical trajectories of writing and their relevance to modern practices

2. Critical and Cultural Thinking

– Writing and critical thinking: distinctions and overlaps with critical literacy
– The influence of family, peers, and teachers on developing writers
– Writing and cultural identity: how social values and norms shape text production
– Conditions that nurture critical engagement with writing
– Writing for civic responsibility: education for citizenship through composition
– Writing as social action in the 21st century

Deliverables:
– Academic paper (3000-4000 words)
– Abstract (250-300 words, italics), with 5-7 keywords
– Final presentation (PowerPoint or similar)
– Participation in peer feedback sessions

Format Guidelines:
– Times New Roman, 12 pt, justified, single-spaced
– Section headings required throughout
– Referencing style: APA 7th edition

Structure:
– Title Page
– Abstract (250-300 words, on its own page, italicised, with the topic, aim, method, results, and conclusion in a single paragraph)
– Keywords (5-7 terms following the abstract)
– Introduction
– Background / Literature Review
– Focus of the Paper
– Solutions and Recommendations
– Future Research Directions
– Conclusion
– References

Note:
– The paper may be written individually, in pairs, or in groups of three (maximum)
– Work will be completed primarily in-class with integrated tasks (e.g., peer feedback, presentation)
– Use formal academic register appropriate to EFL and applied linguistics research.

Writing Task 26 - Exploring Writing as Interdisciplinary Practice

Objective: To investigate the nature, purpose, and evolution of writing through an interdisciplinary lens, integrating perspectives from linguistics, education, media studies, psychology, or cultural studies. Students need to critically examine writing as both a social practice and a cognitive process, exploring how it has adapted across contexts, eras, and technologies.

Task Prompt: Write a research-based academic paper that addresses the following overarching question:

"How does writing function across disciplines and contexts in the 21st century, and what can we learn from past and present writing practices to inform future pedagogical or communicative approaches?"

Possible Areas of Focus:
– Writing development across educational stages
– Writing as critical thinking and cultural expression
– Traditional vs. multimodal writing practices
– The role of writing in digital literacy, civic engagement, or identity construction
– How writing varies across academic disciplines (e.g., literature vs. scientific writing)
– The role of writing in a multilingual or multicultural society

Deliverables:
– Academic paper (3000-4000 words)
– Abstract (250-300 words, italics), with 5-7 keywords
– Final presentation (PowerPoint or similar)
– Participation in peer feedback sessions

Format Guidelines:
– Times New Roman, 12 pt, justified, single-spaced
– Section headings required throughout
– Referencing style: APA 7th edition

Structure:
– Title Page
– Abstract (250-300 words, on its own page, italicised, with the topic, aim, method, results, and conclusion in a single paragraph)
– Keywords (5-7 terms following the abstract)
– Introduction
– Background / Literature Review
– Focus of the Paper
– Solutions and Recommendations
– Future Research Directions
– Conclusion
– References

Note:
– The paper may be written individually, in pairs, or in groups of three (maximum)
– Work will be completed primarily in-class with integrated tasks (e.g., peer feedback, presentation)

–   Use formal academic register appropriate to EFL and applied linguistics research.

Writing Task 27 - Reimagining Literature: Contexts, Functions, and Futures

Objective: To explore the evolving role of literature across historical, cultural, and theoretical contexts. Students ought to examine literature not only as an artistic form but also as a mode of social critique, identity construction, and interdisciplinary reflection. Drawing on literary theory, cultural studies, philosophy, history, or comparative media, the writing task encourages students to critically assess how literature responds to, shapes, and transcends its time.

Task Prompt: Write a research-based academic paper addressing the following overarching question:

"What is the role of literature in shaping cultural consciousness, identity, and critical thought in past and present societies, and how might it continue to evolve in the future?"

Possible Areas of Focus:
–   Literature as a form of resistance, protest, or political engagement
–   Postcolonial or feminist readings of canonical texts
–   Literature and identity (e.g., race, gender, class, nation)
–   Adaptation of literary texts across media (film, digital platforms, performance)
–   The place of literature in contemporary education and public discourse
–   Comparative analysis of literary forms across time periods or cultures
–   The impact of digitalisation on reading, writing, and interpreting literature

Deliverables:
–   Academic paper (3000-4000 words)
–   Abstract (250-300 words, italics), with 5-7 keywords
–   Final presentation (PowerPoint or similar)
–   Participation in peer feedback sessions

Format Guidelines:
–   Times New Roman, 12 pt, justified, single-spaced
–   Section headings required throughout
–   Referencing style: MLA edition

Structure:
– Title Page
– Abstract (250-300 words italicised, with topic, aim, method, results, and conclusion in a single paragraph)
– Keywords (5-7 terms following the abstract)
– Introduction
– Background / Literature Review
– Focus of the Paper
– Solutions and Recommendations
– Future Research Directions
– Conclusion
– References

Note:
– The paper may be written individually, in pairs, or in groups of three (maximum)
– Work will be completed primarily in-class with integrated tasks (e.g., peer feedback, presentation)
– Use formal academic register appropriate to literary and cultural analysis in an EFL context.

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Beyond the Page: Academic and Professional Writing for EFL Students is a coursebook created for final-year English majors at the "Blaže Koneski" Faculty of Philology in Skopje. It aims to help students transition from general academic English to specialized, discipline-oriented writing for academic and professional purposes. Divided into three interconnected parts – Foundations of Academic Writing in the EFL Context, Applied Writing for Real-World Contexts, and Academic Paper Writing in the Humanities – the book offers a structured framework for mastering high-level writing skills. Through theoretical insights, practical tools, annotated examples, exercises, and extended tasks, it fosters fluency, critical thinking, persuasive expression, and familiarity with academic conventions and ethics.

The coursebook is designed for C1–C2 learners with a solid background in English, allowing for both sequential study and modular use. Themes such as critical thinking, cross-cultural awareness, and digital literacy run throughout, ensuring coherence and progression. Its student-centered approach – featuring sample tasks, annotated texts, and peer review activities – encourages autonomy and engagement with writing as a process. The authors acknowledge the challenges faced by EFL learners and hope the book proves both practical and inspiring, while taking full responsibility for any shortcomings.